



Yorkshire Bird Report

2008



Yorkshire Bird Report 2008

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Spurn © YNU

The Yorkshire Naturalists' Union

The Yorkshire Naturalists Union (YNU) is an individual membership organisation and federation of natural history societies and conservation groups from across the county and was founded in 1861. It aims to promote the study and recording of Yorkshire's natural history to benefit its understanding and future conservation.

The YNU works closely with various statutory organisations such as Natural England, the region's local record centres and many other wildlife and conservation charities. It organises field meetings, training sessions and conferences which aim to highlight the immense diversity of Yorkshire's fauna and flora.

For an annual subscription of £25, members are entitled to two issues of the Bulletin, two issues of the Naturalist, the annual Yorkshire Butterflies and Moths Report and the annual Bird Report.

Further details of how to join the YNU can be obtained from the Treasurer or the website. In addition, the availability of previous copies of the Bird Report and recent decisions of the Bird Section's Adjudication Panel can be found at www.ynu.org.uk/birds.

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Cover

Left:

Swallow

Redstart

Chiffchaff

► Dave Mansell

Right:

Puffin

► Steve Race

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This Report covers all 299 species recorded within the county during 2008 including two additions to the county list: Pallas’s Grasshopper Warbler at Spurn and Brown Shrike at Flamborough. Following their recent acceptance, the official Yorkshire List now stands at 445.

Where applicable, YNU’s Birds Section and the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) have accepted all rare and unusual species. There is no mention within the Report of the long-staying Amur Falcon at Tophill Low as it awaits acceptance by the British Ornithological Union who adjudicate on potential firsts for Britain.

This Report details all birds occurring within the current political boundaries of Yorkshire & Cleveland south of the Tees that for recording purposes are divided into the five relevant Watsonian vice-counties (VCs 61-65).

The VCs each have their own recorder with contact details listed on the previous page. A map depicting the recording area covered by this Report is found on the inside back cover. The HerbariaUnited website www.herbariaunited.org/gridrefVC/ will attribute any grid reference to a respective VC; information on site grid references are easily obtained from the online Ordnance Survey “Get a Map” facility, or from the site directories on www.birdguides.com.

Description Requirements

It is our aim to present these Reports with complete accuracy, so that those who use them in the future may accept the species accounts without doubt or query. An Adjudication Panel assists the work of the Birds Section by assessing all national and county rarities requiring a description. The Panel consists of the following members: Ian Court, Mick Cunningham, Geoff Dobbs, Paul Irving, Mike Pilsworth, Graham Speight, Garry Taylor, Craig Thomas, Nick Whitehouse and Steve Worwood. If more than one member of the Panel is unwilling to support a record, it will be classed as ‘not proven’. It must be stressed this doesn’t necessarily mean that the bird has been mis-identified, but more often, that there is not enough detail to be conclusive.

British Birds Rarities Committee

All national rarities must be first described and accepted by BBRC to be included in the Yorkshire Report. We would prefer to receive the description first and will then forward it on immediately, which follows BBRC’s preferred method of record submission; the Birds Section abides by any decision made by BBRC. A list of species for which descriptions are required by BBRC is available at www.bbrc.org.uk.

Yorkshire Rarities

The following list of county rarities requires a description and/or photographic evidence to secure the acceptance needed for publication within this Report.

In addition, the Birds Section reserves the right not to publish records of scarce birds which cannot be attributed to a named observer and are unsupported by photographic evidence.

Taiga Bean Goose	European Honey-buzzard	Ring-billed Gull	Dusky Warbler
Tundra Bean Goose	Black Kite	White-winged Black Tern	Woodchat Shrike
<i>[flight only]</i>	White-tailed Eagle	Alpine Swift	Red-billed Chough
Black Brant	Montagu’s Harrier	Short-toed Lark	Arctic Redpoll
American Wigeon	Rough-legged Buzzard	Red-rumped Swallow	Parrot Crossbill
Ferruginous Duck	Golden Eagle	Tawny Pipit	Cirl Bunting
Surf Scoter	Red-footed Falcon	Red-throated Pipit	Rustic Bunting
White-billed Diver	Kentish Plover	Aquatic Warbler	Little Bunting
Wilson’s Storm-petrel	American Golden Plover	Marsh Warbler	
Black-crowned Night	White-rumped Sandpiper	Melodious Warbler	
Heron	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Dartford Warbler	
Cattle Egret	Red-necked Phalarope	Subalpine Warbler	
Great White Egret	<i>[flight only]</i>	Greenish Warbler	
Purple Heron	Caspian Gull	Radde’s Warbler	

The Panel will require descriptions to support records of difficult to determine races, particularly those whose taxonomic status is under review, including Black-bellied Dipper and Siberian Chiffchaff.

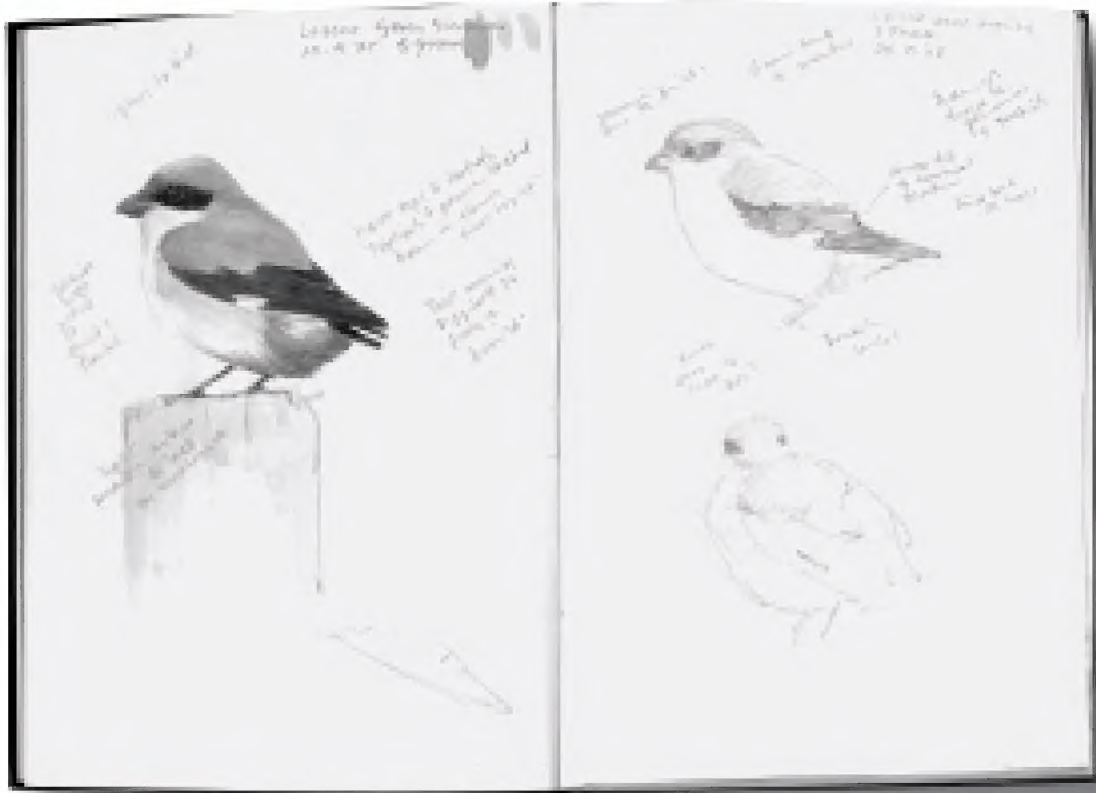
In the cases of closely related species groups, such as American/Pacific Golden Plover and the Pratincole/Dowitcher species, BBRC will not judge records where no specific identification has been reached. Therefore the Adjudication Panel will consider such records for the sake of completeness and to monitor occurrences.

The Panel is also willing to assist in adjudicating any records for local groups and societies.

Descriptions

The work of the Adjudication Panel can be aided if observers submit descriptions as soon as possible. Details should include the description taken in the field, before reference to books; the locality; date and time; habitat; weather conditions; optical aids used; distance from the bird; period of observation; species present for comparison and previous experience of the species. If anyone disagrees with the identification should also be noted. The Birds Section welcomes the electronic submission of records and photographs, with the provision that some detail is supplied about location, first/last dates and the name(s) of the finder(s). Description forms for rarities can be obtained by email from any of the contacts listed on page 4.

If the finder/identifier has not submitted the record, but a photograph has been published in a magazine or on the internet, then the magazine/website will be credited.



Notes taken in a field sketch book • Ray Scally

Acknowledgements

A special thankyou to the local bird club recorders and individuals for contributing the data upon which this publication so relies. In addition, the writing team of Phil Bone, Keith Clarkson, Ian Court, Geoff Dobbs, Ian Kendall, Jim Pewtress, Andy Roadhouse, Jill Warwick, John Wint and Steve Worwood deserve particular credit. Thanks also to Jack Ashton-Booth, Richard Baines, Tony Disley, John Grist, Michael Henry, Jonathan Pomroy, Ray Scally, Richard Tite and Colin Wilkinson for their excellent line artwork. We would also like to express gratitude to the many photographers who submitted work for consideration including: Mike Ashforth, Dave Bryan, Marcus Conway, Dean Eades, Michael Flowers, Sean Gray, John Harwood, Iain Leach, Dave Mansell, Ron Marshall, Peter Martin, Steve Race, Ian Robinson, Mark Thomas and Darren Ward. Special thanks to Phil Warren, the North Pennines Black Grouse Recovery Project Officer and the North York Moors Merlin Study Group for supplying detailed information.

Appreciation must also be given to our advertisers, whose contributions have helped finance continued improvements. A big thank you is also due to Chris Gaughan of Designwing, for all his help and assistance over recent months, Dave Britton who summarised the Cleveland records south of the Tees. Also thanks to Gaynor Chapman for undertaking the arduous task of proof reading the final draft and to Simon Warwick for scanning the line artwork within this publication. In 2008 Keith Clarkson undertook a meticulous census of the entire Flamborough/Bempton seabird colony and he has kindly summarised the important findings in an article on page 167 of this Report. Unfortunately the detailed Calendar had to be omitted in order to accommodate this important paper.

Finally a sincere thanks to all who promoted sales of the latest Yorkshire Bird Report, with particular appreciation to staff at: Filey Country Park Stores; RSPB Bempton Cliffs, Blacktoft Sands, Fairburn Ings, Old Moor & Saltholme; the Wild Bird Café at North Cave Wetlands; YWT Potteric Carr & Spurn Point; Harlow Carr Gardens; Malham and Malham Tarn Field Study Centre.

Highlights



Marsh Warbler (Spurn) • Ian Smith

The year opened with both the Wheatear and the Desert Wheatear remaining in situ north of Scarborough, although the latter unfortunately departed on 2nd January. Record numbers of Water Pipits wintered along parts of the Humber with 31 present at Blacktoft Sands on 16th January. A Black-bellied Dipper first noted at the start of November 2007 near Watton was relocated during February; it subsequently showed well to most visitors until the end of March. The arrival of an adult Night Heron discovered at Scout Dike Res on 9th February caused a stir; it showed several features of the North American race which inevitably elicited debate as to its origin. Yorkshire's second-ever Black Brant was discovered amongst hordes of dark-bellied Brent Geese at Long Bank, Easington at the start of March. Although it soon disappeared, it was refound towards the end of the month; the Spurn area also hosted the only previous county record in early 2001. The first signs of spring were provided by a record influx of Firecrests towards the end of March, with maxima of 11 at Spurn and eight at Flamborough on the final day.

April often proves to be a good month for Nearctic wildfowl and 2008 proved no exception. A Green-winged Teal from 12th April gave Spurn its first ever record and amazingly, it was later joined by another towards the end of the month. The North American theme continued when a first-summer male Dark-eyed Junco visited a garden at Newby in the Yorkshire Dales on 13th April; to the chagrin of most birders, it immediately moved on. Originating from the same continent a Lesser Yellowlegs graced Swine Moor from 22nd April, while a drake American Wigeon proved obliging at Rother Valley CP from the following day. However, one of the year's biggest headline makers pitched offshore of Flamborough Head on 24th April, although it took several hours before news of the drake King Eider reached the masses. Thankfully, only the third county record then showed well to virtually all until the end of the month and generally remained faithful to the north side of the Head. A Black Stork over Scaling Dam on 6th May frustrated many by immediately moving on and the northeast's luck continued the next day with the discovery of a drake Lesser Scaup at Cleasby GP. Spurn attracted its first-

ever Citrine Wagtail on 10th May, when a flighty female stayed briefly in the Walker Butts area for 45 minutes. The weather conditions remained favourable for overshoots from south-east Europe with five Red-footed Falcons subsequently making an appearance. The most widely appreciated gave superb flight views hawking over Pugney's CP, but the more exceptional record related to four feeding with up to ten Hobbies over Thorne Moors mid month. Spurn again hosted a Broad-billed Sandpiper on 24th May, while further inland a Great Reed Warbler belted out its song at Staveley on the same day. A sustained spell of easterlies and overnight rain resulted in a substantial fall at the end of May. Record numbers of Marsh Warblers, Icterine Warblers and Red-breasted Flycatchers appeared along the coast, augmented by Grey-headed Wagtails, Golden Orioles and Red-backed Shrikes. Although major rarities were few, two Thrush Nightingales almost inevitably appeared at Spurn, but Fylingthorpe near Whitby stole the headlines with an immaculate Black-headed Bunting on 28th May.

June was relatively quiet until the monotony was shattered on 22nd June when a Pacific Swift tracked south over Beacon Ponds. Birders on the peninsula failed to pick it up, with suspicions that it must have double-backed confirmed four days later with a repeat performance. However, the excitement on 26th only intensified when a Little Swift incredibly overflowed Spurn a few minutes after the Pacific Swift; those that missed out were given another opportunity when it relocated to Old Moor on the morning of 2nd July. Although it appeared to move on, it returned during the afternoon and entertained carloads of birders until fleeing the approach of a band of rain. The breeding season proved a good one for several species, with 164 lekking Black Grouse in the Dales and a full seabird census at Bempton/Flamborough proved that the meteoric rise in population of Gannets continues, with almost 7000 pairs now present. A pair of Cranes again fledged one juvenile at the established site and two Bitterns raised young at Blacktoft Sands for the first time. The population of Marsh Harriers increased with in excess of 20 nesting attempts, while the Lower Derwent Valley again hosted several calling Spotted Crakes during the summer. Avocets bred at inland sites in both North and South Yorkshire for the first time, while a pair of Marsh Warblers bred at Spurn.

A Glossy Ibis initially seen over Spurn eventually settled in West Yorkshire and represented the first in the county for over a decade. Although not as headline grabbing, but equally unusual, a Shore Lark summered at Spurn. A Black Stork that had remained in Durham for several days was eventually pinned down at Wharfe Ings near York at the end of August, it was the first to linger in the county since 1976. High

pressure drift conditions featured during the middle of September and several coastal sites witnessed their biggest fall of chats and flycatchers for several years. More often associated with the Northern Isles, Great Snipe made landfall at South Gare on 7th and Speeton on 17th September, but first prize went to Yorkshire's first ever Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler unearthed at Spurn on 14th. The same weather conditions also prompted to arrival of large numbers of Honey Buzzards from 13th September; initially centred on the coastal strip between Ravenscar and Flamborough, over 50 eventually appeared across the county, with the last few over inland sites in the south-west of the county on 20th September. A Wilson's Phalarope crossed the river from Alkborough Flats, North Lincolnshire to make a brief visit to Blacktoft Sands on 17th September, but most attention remained focussed on rarities originating from Asia. News of an Olive-backed Pipit on 24th September was overshadowed by the discovery of the county's first ever Brown Shrike at Flamborough. The first ever twitchable record on the mainland it attracted large crowds the following day. A lack of easterlies during October ensured a quiet month with another Olive-backed Pipit somehow sneaking in at Spurn on 15th. However, a switch to north-easterlies at the very end of the month brought a dramatic improvement. The north of the UK had hosted an unprecedented invasion of Two-barred Crossbills in the late summer; Yorkshire eventually benefitted with two males visiting garden feeders at Oakworth near Bradford and Bilsdale, Stokesley. Unfortunately, the former fell prey to a Sparrowhawk, but the latter entertained a procession of birders for several weeks during November. Although the seawatch season was mediocre at best, the efforts of a stalwart at Long Nab were rewarded when a summer-plumaged White-billed Diver flew south on 29th October.

The north-easterly airflow continued throughout the first week of November, prompting the arrival of three late Radde's Warblers, two Dusky Warblers, four Siberian Chiffchaffs, an Olive-backed Pipit and several Pallas's Warblers; more unexpected, a Pied Wheatear was eventually pinned down at Reighton near Filey where it performed well to a succession of admirers from 8th. Inland sites also came up trumps with Yorkshire's first twitchable Caspian Gull for several years at Potteric Carr from 12th November. Equally popular, three Rough-legged Buzzards took up temporary residence at Millington Pastures on the Wolds from 15th. Although relatively quiet, December ended with a Green-winged Teal around Old Moor from 29th, the same day as a very unseasonal Great Shearwater fed off Filey Brigg.



Two-barred Crossbill (Bilsdale) © Marcus Conway



YNU’s Adjudication Panel or the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) has accepted all rare and unusual species that require a description in this Report. The sequence and nomenclature used is that of the BOU *The British List* (seventh edition, 2007), incorporating the recommendations of the BOU Records Committee 36th Report (*Ibis* 2008: 150, 218-220). The sequence for shanks and gulls has altered, some scientific names have changed, and in particular, Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* has been elevated to full species status. Vernacular as well as international names are now included in *The British List* and these are generally used in this Report.

- A** Species that have been recorded in an apparently natural state at least once since 1 January 1950.
- B** Species that were recorded in an apparently natural state at least once between 1 January 1800 and 31 December 1949, but have not been recorded subsequently, (not in this report).
- C** Species that, although introduced, now derive from the resulting self-sustaining populations.
- C1** *Naturalised introduced species* – species that have occurred only because of introduction, e.g. Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus* (must breed or be proven wanderers to the county)
- C2** *Naturalised established species* - species with established populations resulting from introduction by Man, but which also occur in an apparently natural state, e.g. Greylag Goose *Anser anser*
- C3** *Naturalised re-established species* - species with populations successfully re-established by Man in areas of former occurrence, e.g. Red Kite *Milvus milvus*
- C4** *Naturalised feral species* - domesticated species with populations established in the wild, e.g. Rock Pigeon (Dove) / Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*.
- C5** *Vagrant naturalised species* - species from established naturalized populations abroad, e.g. possibly some Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea* occurring in Britain. There are currently no species in category C5.
- C6** *Former naturalised species* – species formerly placed in C1 whose naturalised populations are either no longer self-sustaining or are considered extinct, e.g. Lady Amherst’s Pheasant *Chrysolophus amherstiae*. There are no Yorkshire species in this category.
- D** Species that would otherwise appear in Category A except that there is reasonable doubt that they have ever occurred in a natural state. Species placed in Category D only form no part of the British List, and are not included in the species totals. (See separate section in this Report).

E Species that have been recorded as introductions, human-assisted transportees or escapees from captivity, and whose breeding populations (if any) are thought not to be self-sustaining. Species in Category E that have bred in the wild in Britain are designated as E*. Category E species form no part of the British List (unless already included within Categories A, B or C). (See separate section in this Report).

The British List comprises only those species in Categories A, B and C.
The Yorkshire List comprises species in categories A, B and C, but the rules for including Category C species must be applicable to Yorkshire.

Abbreviations used in the Report

AON	Apparently Occupied Nests
BBS	Breeding Bird Survey
CP	Country Park
GC	Golf Course
GP	Gravel Pit
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NR	Nature Reserve
RBBP	Rare Bird Breeding Panel
Res	Reservoir(s)
SF/SW	Sewage Farm/Sewage Works
WTW	Water Treatment Works

Species Totals

Species totals in the name line refer to the number of records reported over the last five years, including the current year.

Previous Records

Previous records in the status line refer to the number of accepted records, excluding the current year. If the species is or was under the jurisdiction of **BBRC**, the totals only include records accepted and published by that body. Birds seen at more than one location in the same year and considered to refer to probably the same individual(s) are regarded as a single record. Birds seen at more than one location in the same year, but considered to refer to possibly the same individual(s) are regarded as separate records. On a limited number of occasions, a record may consist of more than one individual (e.g. parties of Bee-eaters *Merops apiaster* and some waders).

Species Status

A preliminary statement indicates the status of each species in Yorkshire.
Vagrant
Up to 10 records in total since records began
Rare
0-10 individuals each year in the past 10 years
Scarce
11-100 individuals each year in the past 10 years
Uncommon
101-1000 individuals each year in the past 10 years
Fairly common
More than 1000 records per year
Common
More than 10000 records per year
Abundant
More than 50000 records per year

Conservation Status

Status on the list of birds of conservation concern 2002-2007 from the RSPB’s review **The Population Status of Birds in the UK** is noted.
Red list = high conservation concern: declining UK population or globally threatened
Amber list = medium conservation concern.

UK BAP Species

In 1995, 26 bird species were identified as being deserving of the highest priority within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP), because of either threat on a global scale or population declines of 50% or more in the UK in the preceding 25 years. All but one are UK breeding species, the exception being Aquatic Warbler. In 2006, a new UK BAP priority species list was published, operating at the subspecies level. The current UK BAP species are labelled in the Systematic List.

Breeding Bird Survey Figures

In 2008, 204 widely distributed 1 x 1 km. squares were surveyed in Yorkshire and Humberside for the British Trust for Ornithology’s Breeding Bird Survey, a decrease from the 225 surveyed in 2007, perhaps reflecting the effort being put into the Atlas. Of these, more than half (112) were in North Yorkshire, with the rest shared fairly evenly between the other three counties, although East Yorkshire/Humberside also includes a handful of North Lincolnshire squares.
The total number of 1km squares in which the species was recorded is noted on the status line (out of the 204 surveyed). This should be interpreted with care although does give some indication about how widespread species are. The population trends for those species with sufficient records to qualify for meaningful analysis of the BBS data are stated for 1994-2008 and 2007-2008, (with comparable figures for England in brackets in each case).

For example:
MALLARD
BBS 111/204: +28% (+32) 1994-2008, +7% (+1) 2007-08
Found in 111 of the 204 surveyed squares. There has been a 28% increase in population levels counted in the Yorkshire & Humberside squares between 1994-2008 compared to a 32% increase in England, and a 7% increase from 2007 to 2008 in the region compared to a 1% increase nationally. Short-term changes are not always statistically significant from a relatively small numbers of surveys based on two visits, and some species can also be under-recorded on early morning breeding bird surveys.

The totals of the maximum counts recorded in each of the 204 squares provide a useful indication of relative abundance, with the caveat of differences in detectability. Of interest, in 1994 Swift was ranked 11th but no longer features in the table. In 2008 Blackbird, Chaffinch and Wren continued their upward trend and Meadow Pipit also moved up a place, all at the expense of the three corvids.

Rank 2008	Yorkshire’s Top 15	Totals counted	Rank 2007	Rank 1994
1	Woodpigeon	4359	1	5
2	Starling	2493	2	1
3	Blackbird	2237	4	6
4	Chaffinch	1867	5	7
5	Rook	1762	3	2
6	Meadow Pipit	1622	7	8
7	Carrion Crow	1594	6	9
8	House Sparrow	1440	8	4
9	Wren	1333	10	15
10	Jackdaw	1290	9	14
11	Skylark	1248	11	13
12	Swallow	1216	12	12
13	Lapwing	1138	13	3
14	Blue Tit	1032	14	-
15	Feral Pigeon	932	15	10

WeBS Status

Data has been supplied by the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS), a joint scheme of the British Trust for Ornithology, The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Joint Nature Conservation Committee (the last on behalf of the Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment and Heritage Service, Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage). Although WeBS data are presented within this report, in some cases the figures may not have been fully checked and validated, and is sometimes combined with counts from other sources. Therefore, for any detailed analyses of WeBS data, enquiries should be directed to the WeBS team at the **British Trust for**



Red-footed Falcon (Pugney’s CP) ▶ Iain Leach

Systematic List



MUTE SWAN *Cygnetsnus olor* **AC2**
Uncommon resident breeder and winter visitor in all VCs. BBS 18/204
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 320: GB threshold 375

The breeding population nationally has been increasing since the 1980s and is reflected in wintering numbers. The regional population appears to be stable or increasing slightly: recorded in six more BBS squares this year. Local movements for moulting occur, but are poorly understood.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Beal Carrs	36	20	12	30	34	7	4	20	33	45	35	29
Castle Howard	30	29	27	14	10	20	13	16	33	32	34	49
Fairburn Ings	120	195	147	136	112	113	170	204	–	126	99	90
Flasks Lake	21	2	9	4	41	27	34	32	10	4	8	19
Hay-a-Park GP	17	7	3	4	5	16	17	19	23	23	10	12
Hornsea Mere	28	34	29	21	74	116	166	147	155	117	64	46
Lower Derwent NNR	99	97	75	101	–	–	–	–	–	68	71	–
North Humber	265	130	193	137	242	5	10	373	236	280	254	215
Nosterfield NR	19	4	10	10	18	12	2	15	19	12	26	20
Old Moor	28	22	22	45	22	45	57	57	45	33	9	10
Otley Wetlands	–	–	5	–	–	13	9	11	15	–	27	13
Pugney’s CP	22	11	19	19	12	16	21	17	10	12	13	7
Pulfin Bog	20	32	62	42	1	2	2	4	7	6	3	20
Ripon Race Course	31	74	61	48	38	12	17	18	12	17	35	–
Rodley NR	15	17	8	4	3	7	4	3	16	24	29	21
Southfield Res	12	20	16	24	6	8	13	17	15	9	12	16
South Tees	9	9	5	7	9	20	13	14	11	6	4	7
Swillington Ings	16	45	65	45	34	4	91	27	31	37	42	45
Thrybergh CP	15	6	7	8	–	–	–	–	65	10	13	13
Tophill Low	45	20	18	40	22	33	42	31	14	70	76	34
Winterset Res	19	12	11	8	11	31	26	33	20	30	14	22

Most reports were of small family parties although some higher counts included: 19 at Potteric Carr, 17 at North Cave, 14 at Staveley NR, 13 on Cononley Ings and 11 at Ulley CP, all in January. In February, canals seemed to be popular with 45 on the canal in Ripon and 42 on the canal at Rotherham. A count of 74 at Ripon RC was the highest count ever recorded in the Harrogate area. There were 30 at Doncaster Lakeside, 14 on the river Wharfe at Otley, 12 on Roundhay Park (Leeds) and 11 at Driffild. In March, there were 42 at Thrybergh CP on 2nd and groups of 18 at three sites: Binnington Carr on 9th, at Wheldrake Ings on 24th and at Pepper Arden (Northallerton) on 30th. Elsewhere there were nine at West Ayton Carr in March and 26 at Farnley Res on 16th May.

During the summer pairs bred at: Anglers CP, Edderthorpe Flash, Flaxby GC, Heron Lakes, Kelk Lake, Kildwick, Knotford Nook, a pair at North Cave failed, Peasholm Park, Potteric Carr (two pairs), Rodley NR (two pairs produced just two cygnets), Ruston Carr, Spurn, Star Carr, Snaygill, Thrybergh CP, Ulley CP, Winterset Res (two pairs) and Moorhouse Lane Pond. Ten pairs are reported to have bred in the Leeds area, though only seven successfully raised young.

In the final quarter of the year, ten flew west over Ruston Parva on 3rd September and there were 20 at Mickletown Ings on 14th, 12 at Edderthorpe Flash on 18th and 65 at Thrybergh CP on 28th September. There were 27 at Potteric Carr on 1st and 12 Fountains Abbey on 26th October. In November there were up to 28 at Potteric Carr and 11 at Edderthorpe Flash, with 23 at Roundhay Park in December.

BEWICK’S SWAN *Cygnetsnus columbianus* **A**
Amber list and UK BAP species: scarce migrant and winter visitor in declining numbers.
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 200: GB threshold 81

The Eurasian race *bewickii* breeds in the tundra of the Russian high Arctic and winters in the Netherlands and at just a few favoured sites in Britain. It is recently becoming increasingly scarce in the county; potentially due to increasing numbers remaining in continental Europe due to milder winters, coupled with British winterers concentrating at feeding reserves elsewhere.

At the start of the year, an adult was with the Whooper Swan herd in the Lower Derwent Valley. Present from 20th January, it remained in the North Duffield Carrs area, where it was joined by a second bird on 25th February. Both birds proved to be highly elusive, but remained in the area until late March. The only other spring record was of four that made an all too brief visit to Lingham Water on 26th March.

In October, a small number were caught up in a large southerly movement of Whooper Swans, with five south of Grimston and five at North Duffield Carrs on the morning of 17th. Elsewhere four adults were with three Whooper Swans at Cayton Carrs on 1st November before they flew west and two headed west over High Road Well Moor, Halifax on 5th November. November’s last headed south over Cayton and later Flamborough on 15th. There were no further records until December, when a single joined the Whoopers at North Duffield Carrs on 12th and three flew south over Thorganby Ings on Boxing Day.

WHOOPER SWAN *Cygnetsnus cygnetsnus* **A E**
Amber list: uncommon migrant in increasing numbers and winter visitor Oct – April
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 210: GB threshold 57

Breeds from Iceland east across northern Eurasia, with Britain’s wintering population of mostly Icelandic origin, but some Fennoscandian birds have been recorded in eastern England. A small herd winters in the Lower Derwent valley, but over 3750, or half the British population, now winter on the Ouse Washes and some of these migrate through the county, which contributes to the increasing numbers being reported.

Monthly Maxima

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Duffield Carrs	88	63	59	14	–	1	–	–	–	30	93	61
Beal Carrs	39	33	13	9	–	–	–	–	–	10	10	19

The small wintering herds that once graced the county are now a thing of the past. Either most reports are of birds flying over or relate to birds that have made a brief stop while on passage. The only regular wintering herds in the county are now at North Duffield Carrs and at Beal Carrs. Over the winter period, both locations held good numbers, but they were lower compared to 2007. Smaller wintering groups were also present at Flotmanby Carr with up to nine (including five juvs) present since November 2007. Elsewhere up to eight were in fields just north of High Eske NR throughout January/February, up to seven were in the Swillington Ings area from 7th February to 14th April and a single remained at Blacktoft Sands from 8th January to 10th March.

At the start of the year an immature was at Lingham Lake and two adults were at Nosterfield on 5th and on the same date a bird flew south over Southfield Res. On 6th two adults were on Southfield Res and a bird was on Tophill Low. On 10th a juvenile was at Lingham Lake and probably the same bird was at Flasks Lake on 27th. In February six flew north over Wadworth on 2nd and five were at Broadstones Res on 9th, when there was also a juvenile at Nosterfield NR. Two were at Tophill Low from 2nd–4th February and 18 were at Gouthwaite Res on 10th. Records increased during March as birds began to make their way northwards. Some of the larger counts include 23 past Filey Brigg and eight at Pulfin Bog on 8th. On 9th there were seven at Pepper Arden and at Southfield Res and three were at Chelker Res and at West Ayton; the latter until 16th. On 10th there were 14 at Winterset Res, with 15 here the following day, 13 flew over Pontefract Race Course on 13th and 12 were at Southfield Res and 13 on Chelker Res on 14th. Peak movement commenced from 15th when there were 41 at Rother Valley CP and 87 were on Potteric Carr (which were still present the following day). On 16th 150 were noted in the Aire Valley between Skipton and Cononley Ings, with 38 at Edderthorpe Flash, 59 at Firsby Res, 72 flew north–west over Roche Abbey, 45 flew north–west over Redmires Res, 173 flew over Old Moor and 47 flew north over Blacktoft Sands. There were 35 on Broomhill Flash on 18th, ten at Lindley Wood Res on 20th and 22 at Hay–a–Park on 21st, when there were 15 at Scaling Dam. On 25th there were ten on Flasks Lake (Ripon) and on 27th 117 in two skeins were noted heading north–west up the Humber past Sunk Island and 56 flew north over Barmston. On 28th there were 19 at North Cave and the following day there were 45 at Flasks Lake, 11 at Gouthwaite Res, 23 at Southfield Res, 13 flew up the Humber past Spurn and 46 were near Thorngumbald.

From the end of March numbers began to tail off: there were 28 at Hay–a–Park and 20 flew over Farnham GP on 31st, when there were four at Anglers CP, two at Nosterfield NR and a single at Otley.

In April there were four at Scaling Dam on 1st, when 14 were still at North Duffield Carrs, with an injured bird still present here on 4th. Nine were at Potteric Carr on 1st/2nd, nine were at Eccup Res on 3rd, 30 were at Potteric Carr on 9th, when 25 were on Fairburn Ings. One was at Pugney’s CP on 9th, 66 were at Bellflask on 10th, singles at North Cave and Hatfield Moors on 11th (the latter still present the next day), six were at Old Moor on 13th, 24 flew over Strines on 17th and one was at Southfield Res and two circled over Ulley CP on 29th.

Lone birds were at Southfield Res on 22nd May and at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd June, the latter presumably the injured bird.

The first of the autumn was a group of three at Silverwood Pit on 23rd September, followed by a single at Rother Valley CP on 30th. In October, there were two at Houghton Washlands on 3rd when there were singles at Winterset Res and over Broadstones Res. Four were at Anglers CP and one flew past Spurn on 4th, while on the 5th ten flew east over Listerdale Wood and lone birds were at Nosterfield NR and Thrybergh CP. Two flew past Flamborough and then Filey on 6th, eight were at Hay–a–Park GP on 8th and two adults were at Lingham Water on 9th. Elsewhere there were 15 at Scaling Dam on 14th, five flew south–east over North Cave on 15th, six were at Fairburn Ings on 15th. On 17th, a family party dropped in at Winscar Res and five were at Blackmoorfoot Res. Some of the higher counts include 27 at Winterset Res on 18th October, when nine adults flew over Thorne Moors, seven flew south over Folkton Carr, eight adults were at Scaling Dam on 22nd, with 11 birds here on 24th, 23 flew over Melmerby and then High Batts on 23rd, ten were on Anglers CP on 26th. On 28th there were eight on Edderthorpe Flash, ten were on Anglers CP and 13 were on Broomhill Flash, with six birds still here on 29th. In November nine were on Scaling Dam on 11th, five were at both Nosterfield NR on 12th and at Tophill Low NR on 14th, six on Chelker Res on 16th and up to four were recorded from many other locations.

Autumn coastal passage was first recorded on 4th October when a lone bird was noted passing Spurn. Elsewhere nine flew past Kilnsea on 15th, with 15 past Spurn on 16th. On the 18th 23 were noted passing Flamborough, 25 flew past Filey Brigg and 45 headed past Spurn. On 22nd October 33 passed Spurn and 11 were in fields at Flamborough. On 24th 16 flew south past Flamborough and nine headed south over Filey. On 27th there were three off Ness Point and 11 flew south past Filey, while 104 were logged at Spurn; the second highest day tally ever recorded there. Elsewhere six were noted heading south past Long Nab on 31st October. In total 253 were logged heading south at Spurn between 4th October and 28th December and 62 were recorded similarly at Filey from 6th October to 11th November.

During the second half of the year, small winter herds were at several locations, including Blacktoft Sands which held four from 17th October; up to seven were then reported until 22nd December. A small number were also noted flying over, such as nine east on 18th October and eight west on 6th November. A small group took up residence at Castle Howard from 6th October, with the original six increasing to nine from late October. Nine were present in fields just north of High Esk NR from 28th November, with 13 here on 6th December and 19 on 21st December, although just one remained until the year end. Elsewhere a bird was at Scalby Lodge from 20th October with 11 here the following day and 15 (including nine juvs) were here on 24th October. Up to 11 were in the Swillington Ings area from 15th October to 21st December. There were also regular reports from North Cave, where seven remained from 17th–19th October, 13 flew north on 11th November, eight flew over on 22nd November and up to four stayed until the end of December. Finally a herd took up residence in fields adjacent to Hatfield Moors from November, although they spent most time on fields just over the county boundary in North Lincolnshire; 40 were present on 15th November.

A single at Nosterfield on 31st October sported yellow ring T7D; this was an adult male ringed two months earlier at Grunnavatn in Iceland on 12th August.

BEAN GOOSE *Anser fabalis* **A** 52,21,19,42,19
Amber list: scarce and irregular winter visitor and passage migrant
Several subspecies breed across the northern Palearctic, two of which occur in the county. The form *rossicus* is the more common, occurring in small parties in some winters.

Bean Goose *sp. Anser fabalis sp.*
Singles not attributed to a specific race included a single with 12 Pink–footed Geese at Low Skirlington on 6th and 8th February (EJH.RL. *et al.*). One visited Hornsea Mere on 26th October and another appeared at Scalby Lodge Pond on 7th December (IG).

Tundra Bean Goose *Anser fabalis rossicus* **A**
A single accompanied Greylags and a White–fronted Goose at Tunstall between 16th–18th February (TI), with

another present at East Park, Hull from 21st–25th (RL *et al.*); presumably the same then relocated to Hornsea Mere where it stayed from 1st March–26th April (EJH.RL. *et al.*). Elsewhere a long staying individual resided with the Greylags at Scaling Dam; found on 25th March it remained until 5th May (MAB *et al.*).

Three accompanied six White-fronts in fields adjacent to Buckton Hall, near Speeton from 7th–9th November (IK: MT *et al.*). Two dropped onto fields at Long Nab briefly on 9th November before heading south (AFo); presumably the same duo then appeared later on in the same day at Wykeham Lakes (RHA: PW). Four at North Frodingham on 15th later flew off north and two accompanied 210 Pink-footed Geese at Wheldrake Ings on 20th and 24th (CSR). December’s sole record brought seasonal cheer to observers of a single in roadside fields at Mickleby on 24th/25th.

Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis fabalis* **A**

A single appeared near Brotton GC on 18th November (HM *et al.*).

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus* **A**

Amber list: fairly common migrant and winter visitor Sept – March

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 2700: GB threshold 2400

This species breeds in east Greenland and central Iceland and winters in Britain, and a population also breeds in Svalbard, mostly wintering in the Low Countries. Wintering numbers have been increasing in Britain for the past 25 years, and more passage birds overfly Yorkshire on migration to wintering grounds in south Lincolnshire and Norfolk.

At the start of the year there were 180 on the Humber at Sunk Island on 1st January, a skein of 100 flew over Ulley CP on 2nd and a similar number overflowed Eccup Res on 5th. There were 26 at East Tanfield (Ripon), 100 flew past Scalby Lodge and 85 flew north over Sheffield on 6th. There were 180 at Nosterfield NR on 13th, 500 flew south–west over Rotherham and 140 headed west over Scout Dike Res on 17th, 1000 visited Hatfield Moors on 19th, 120 flew over Wilsic on 20th, 1000 tracked over Treeton Dyke on 21st and two days later 140 flew north–west over Sheffield, 330 were at Nosterfield NR and 200 flew over Old Moor. On the 24th, 585 flew past Spurn and on 26th 137 were on the Humber at Welwick Pump Station and 75 flew over Sothall, Sheffield.

At the end of January, a very large movement took place on 28th including: 200 over Tadcaster, 220 over Heslington, 200 over Clifton Ings, 120 over Acomb and 300 over the Lower Derwent Valley. Elsewhere there were 300 west over Hessle, 130 west over Swanland, 50 west over Doncaster GC, 550 west over Potteric Carr and 600 west in three skeins over Fairburn Ings, which may have been the same group later heading over Skipton SW. Also in the Skipton area, there were 300 over Stirton and 50 over Skipton. In the Harrogate area three skeins totalling 338 flew over Littlethorpe, 690 went over Staveley NR and 120 over Farnham GP. Some of the other high counts recorded included: 150 north–west over North Cave, 500 over Swillington Ings, 660 west over Winterset Res, 420 over Gargrave, 440 over Wainstalls, 190 over Old Moor, 196 over Addingham, 110 over Shipley, 250 north over Upsall, Middlesbrough, 200 over Dinnington and skeins of 50 over Burton Leonard, Ruston and Pudsey. This movement was also recorded along the coast, with birds noted heading north: 1150 were noted over Atwick, 1400 flew past Ravenscar, 1300 tracked past Filey Brigg and 1619 headed north at Spurn. Although duplication between sites is inevitable, the scale of this movement was nevertheless significant and presumably related to birds leaving Norfolk wintering grounds for staging posts further north in the UK.

The movement continued on a much smaller scale on 29th January with: 250 over Pocklington, 150 over Blacktoft, 350 over Fairburn Ings, 300 over Rotherham, 300 over Potteric Carr. In the Harrogate area 210 went over Littlethorpe and 250 headed over Aldwark Bridge; 52 flew over Stainton and 86 landed in fields just north of Ringstone Edge Res.

At Carthorpe Mires 358 grazed in the company of Greylags on 3rd February, peaking at 544 on 9th and then decreasing to leave 67 on 1st March. On 7th February 536 headed past Spurn, 150 overflowed Pudsey and 500 tracked north–west over Spurn. The next day witnessed skeins of 150 over Shaw Rigg and Kirkbymoorside, with 160 west over Barnbow, Leeds, 160 west over Winterset Res, 120 east over Silsden and 140 west over Thorpe Audlin. On 9th 400 flew north past Filey and a flock on Hatfield Moors peaked at 600. On 10th 75 headed north–west over Stainton and probably the same group seen 35 minutes later heading north over Scout Dike Res, while 300 passed over Potteric Carr. On 12th 120 were along the Aire Valley between Skipton and Cononley Ings, 120 flew north–west over Skipton and 50 flew west over Netherton (Huddersfield). On 14th 1922 flew over Kingswood and 1400 headed over Thrybergh CP. On 15th Nosterfield NR recorded 110 and 200 flew north–west over Cottingham on 29th.

In March two skeins totalling 230 flew over Scaling Dam on 27th. The last spring records were two at Smallways on 3rd April and on the same date 130 flew west over Potteric Carr and 240 flew over Gledhow

Valley Woods. Three at Wheldrake Ings on 18th, 275 flew past Filey on 19th, 50 headed south over Scalby Lodge on 20th and eight dropped in at Nosterfield NR on 24th April. In May, singles remained at Wheldrake Ings from 1st–10th and Nosterfield NR from 5th–11th. Also in May 84 flew north over Southfield Res on 6th, there were two at Scaling Dam on 13th, one flew over Middlethorpe Ings (York) on 14th and a single visited Lingham Water on 18th. The final record was a single at Scaling Dam on 14th/15th June.

The first of the autumn was a group of four at Blacktoft on 8th September, followed by 27 east over North Anston on 11th, 40 flew east over Rother Valley VP on 15th, 40 were at Blacktoft on 18th September and a skein of 100 passed Flamborough on 20th. On 23rd September there were eight at Nosterfield NR and a skein of 40 headed over Ecclesall (Sheffield), while there were 47 over Hirst Courtney on 24th, 50 over Heslington on 25th, 64 east over Winterset Res on 21st and 108 passed Ness Point on 27th.

The first large movement occurred on 28th September with: 2606 south over Skelton, 1560 south over Ruston Parva, 600 south–east over Bransdale, 2253 were logged heading south in 18 skeins between 0700hrs and 1530hrs over Glaisdale, 180 over Kirkbymoorside, 60 flew over Gilling, 550 over Helperthorpe (Malton), 300 south over Wetwang, 1180 over Tophill Low NR (up to 1300hrs). Skeins were also noted heading over York with 160 over Heslington (two skeins heading south–east) and 41 were noted heading south over Copmanthorpe. In the Harrogate area skeins totalling 1046 went south over Nosterfield up to mid–day, with 463 over Ripon Parks, plus 185 over Littlethorpe, 130 over Farnham GP, 90 at Staveley NR and 100 over Gouthwaite. Elsewhere 30 flew west over Oughtershaw, 76 over Skipton SW, 38 flew south over Cononley, 28 dropped onto fields at Swillington Ings, 73 headed east over Huddersfield. This movement was also reflected at coastal locations where: 50 overflowed Hinderland, 1100 in 35 skeins flew south past Speeton between 0700hrs and 1000hrs, 1380 headed south over Scarborough, 135 flew over Haverdale, 1200 flew past Filey Brigg and 9175 headed south past Spurn; in total the latter site logged 20,377 south between 18th September and 18th November.

Birds continued to move during October with 120 north–west over Potteric Carr and 110 over Skipton SW on 6th and 96 over Nosterfield NR on 9th. On 12th there were: 400 over Ulley CP, 100 over Dinnington, 1488 over Orgreave Lakes and 1000 over Thrybergh CP. Two days later 150 flew south over North Cave. On 17th October 1333 headed over Filey and the following day witnessed 170 over Borrowby, 600 north over North Cave, 650 over Rother Valley CP, 200 south–east over Thrybergh CP, 160 east over Silverwood Tip and 100 over Ulley CP. On the evening of 24th 500 landed at Wheldrake Ings and on the same date there were 100 over North Cave. Elsewhere, 300 flew east over Brampton Bierlow and 220 north–west over Canklow on 25th October. On 28th 600 flew west–north–west over Carlton Marsh and 260 passed over Thrybergh CP and 250 flew north over South Anston the next day.

A number of small movements were recorded in November as birds were presumably changing wintering grounds. Starting with 150 over Pocklington on 3rd, 300 over Rotherham on 6th and 200 north over Canklow and 300 east over Kiveton Pit. On 8th, 750 flew east over Old Moor, 600 went north–west over Southfield Res and 700 overflowed Swillington Ings. On 10th November 300 flew east over Carlton Marsh and on 15th there were 250 over Bardsey and 150 over Wheldrake Ings. On 16th 141 flew over Rodley NR, while the following day 200 flew over Edderthorpe Flash and 180 flew west over Southfield Res. On 19th 1000 flew south over North Cave, with 2000 north there two days later. Finally 170 headed east over Winterset Res on 29th and 150 tracked east over Potteric Carr on 30th.

In December, there were: 300 over North Ferriby on 1st; 150 west over Howden on 5th; 125 over Rawmarsh and 130 over Snailsden on 6th. On 23rd December 120 flew west over Southfield Res and 222 were over Thrybergh CP.

Some chose to spend the late autumn/early winter along the Humber and feeding flocks included: 500 on fields opposite Blacktoft Sands on 9th October, increasing to 2500 on 13th, 5000 on 19th October and 5800 on 6th November. Further along the Humber 2200 visited Sunk Island on 15th November. Also in November, 370 remained at North Cave from 13th–16th and 210 were at Wheldrake Ings on 24th.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons* **A**

Amber list and UK BAP species: scarce winter visitor and migrant

All records are assumed to be of the Russian breeding population *albifrons*, which winters in small numbers in southern England, unless stated otherwise, as the Greenland race *flavirostris* is a rare bird in the county.

It was a better showing than in previous years. January records included up to five at Wheldrake Ings, while on 2nd there were six at Tunstall, three at North Cave and seven visited Paull Holme Strays on 4th; 26 made a brief stop at Spurn on the latter date. Seven were in fields at Easington on 5th, when eight came in off the sea at Spurn. Singles were at Burton Riggs on 6th, Oxenhope from 9th –12th, at Scalby Lodge from 9th –13th and at Burton Riggs on 23rd, with three over Welton Waters on 12th January.

In February one flew north past Spurn on 14th and singles were at: Tunstall on 16th/17th, Old Moor on 20th,

East Park (Hull) the next day, a single associated with Greylags at Staveley on 23rd/24th, at Wheldrake Ings on 28th, Spurn from 24th–29th and two were with Pink–feet at Wykeham Lakes on 23rd.

In March one was at Edderthorpe Flash from 6th–28th, three were at Spurn on 10th and a first–winter took up residence at Scaling Dam from 11th March until 15th April, with presumably the same again from 7th–21st June. Additional March records included singles at Pulfin on 6th, at Brandesburton on 13th, at Pulfin Bog on 14th, Spurn on 15th, Old Moor on 25th, Sunk Island on 29th and Wombwell Ings on 30th. The last spring records were four at Blacktoft on 5th April and a single at Todmorden from 18th–23rd April.

One at Lovell Hill on 21st October was followed by singles at Redcar on 4th and Potteric Carr on 5th November. A small influx on 7th included six south past Spurn, four visited Buckton Hall, three appeared on Edderthorpe Flash (to 27th) and a single reappeared at Potteric Carr (again present on 11th). Two at Spurn on 8th November flew south the following day, when there were three at Kilnsea. A second arrival occurred from 16th November with three at Edderthorpe Flash and 20 flew south over Kexby (York) the next day, when a single arrived at Flamborough (staying until 1st December). Finally, three visited Old Moor on 18th December.

Greenland White–fronted Goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris* A

An adult associated with Greylag Geese at Castle Howard from 9th March–5th April and an adult was in fields by Redcar Fire Station on 15th November (CD); perhaps the same then appeared at Hemlington Lake from 28th December to the end of the year (JR *et al.*).

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser* AC2 C4

Amber list: fairly common feral breeder and winter visitor. BBS 37/204

The introduced population is at record levels nationally, having doubled in the last 12 years, and the county’s largely sedentary feral population is still expanding. Seven of the top 14 sites of national importance are in the county: in rank order by five–year mean: – Nosterfield NR, Lower Derwent Ings, Tophill Low, Eccup Res, Humber Estuary, Bolton–on–Swale GP and Hornsea Mere. Wintering birds include migrants, but few, if any, are from Iceland or the amber–listed north–west Scotland population.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Beal Carrs	245	152	75	22	53	15	60	226	275	36	159	310
Blacktoft Sands	50	32	10	26	–	–	100	230	600	30	1	40
Bolton–on–Swale	79	125	79	95	82	491	216	716	182	316	240	122
Castle Howard	638	100	429	346	32	396	154	1	43	178	139	20
Eccup Res	264	34	2	–	–	–	–	1883	–	397	312	8
Fairburn Ings	30	54	30	40	25	104	54	273	24	47	42	180
Farnham GP	300	270	–	20	2	7	4	140	200	962	10	80
Flasks Lake	15	90	120	70	380	39	551	1000	1755	1320	400	20
Gouthwaite Res	64	303	90	99	280	356	172	25	60	11	20	18
Hay–a–Park GP	60	3	4	6	34	296	125	360	434	606	200	80
Hornsea Mere	34	145	155	190	–	–	–	–	558	415	448	–
Lingham Lake	48	160	12	12	106	188	550	1360	1020	1200	200	500
Lockwood Beck	25	49	36	0	104	104	17	20	32	0	0	67
Lower Derwent NNR	1056	348	101	168	–	–	–	–	1003	1472	1126	–
North Cave	122	1	10	–	–	–	–	–	–	627	700	150
North Humber	537	298	296	168	327	7	6	398	745	695	310	372
Nosterfield NR	670	80	19	22	98	60	805	1110	2000	1800	687	165
Old Moor	19	6	9	22	28	41	37	106	111	154	91	35
Pulfin Bog	–	264	30	–	–	85	543	–	600	–	10	–
Ripon Race Course	350	132	141	20	185	22	217	269	350	340	555	–
Scaling Dam	317	321	80	48	272	643	543	637	16	488	9	203
Scorton Quarry	–	730	460	66	34	380	151	404	93	45	141	–
Staveley NR	294	60	100	12	–	–	60	–	600	300	500	300
Smallways	–	237	121	14	26	5	–	–	1	547	77	2
Southfield Res	120	64	37	31	35	61	55	34	298	572	270+	400+
Tophill Low	585	113	262	62	88	73	14	420	188	630	650	509

In January there were 102 at East Park (Hull), 150 flew over Skipsea on 5th, up to 90 were feeding in fields at Buttercrambe (York), 190 were at North Ferriby, 114 were on the river Wharfe at Newton Kyme, up to 400 were at Staveley NR, 60 flew over Skipton SW on 28th, 120 were at Kelk Lake on 27th, with 100 still present on 3rd February. Elsewhere in February, there were 150 at Staveley NR on 8th and 75 at Grimwith Res on 12th.

Over the summer breeding was reported from many sites, including: Allerthorpe GP (six pairs), Burton Riggs (five broods), Cod Beck Res (64 goslings), Harewood Park, Lockwood Beck (82 goslings), Margrove Ponds (three goslings), North Cave (6+ pairs), Potteric Carr (six broods), Pulfin Bog (seven pairs), Scaling Dam (36 broods, 235 goslings), Skelton Lake (three pairs), Southfield Res (five broods), Swillington Ings (nine pairs), Thrybergh Tip, Welton Waters (two broods), Wykeham Lake (11 broods). In May, a survey of the geese in York revealed a count of 245 adults (235 in 2007) and 130 goslings (88 in 2007) divided between 31 families (22 in 2007).

Post breeding gatherings in August included: 1883 at Eccup Res, 1360 at Lingham Lake, 1110 at Nosterfield NR, 716 at Bolton–on–Swale, 637 at Scaling Dam, 420 at Tophill Low, 404 at Scorton Quarry, 380 at Swillington Ings, but all these pale in significance to the estimated 3000 birds at Carthick Wood. In September, there were 2000 in the Nosterfield NR area, 1003 in the Lower Derwent Valley NR and 745 along the Humber, while there were 600 at both Pulfin Bog and Blacktoft Sands and 558 at Hornsea Mere, 150 at Swillington Ings, 125 on Potteric Carr and 80 at Edderthorpe Flash. In October there were 572 at Southfield Res on 5th, 320 in fields near Sheriff Hutton on 27th probably derived from the Castle Howard population, 160 were at Potteric Carr on 23rd and 92 were at Edderthorpe Flash on 18th. In the final two months of the year 132 were at Edderthorpe Flash during November. Counts in December included: 113 at East Park (Hull) and 400 at Ripon Parks.

Hybrids

There were three white farmyard x Greylag Goose crosses at Southfield Res on 5th October. A bird was paired to a Canada Goose at Nosterfield NR and produced five young.

GREATER CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis* C2

Fairly common feral breeder, migrant and winter visitor. BBS 29/204

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 380: GB threshold 375

This largely sedentary naturalised introduction continues to increase nationally.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Castle Howard	110	33	103	63	52	250	239	60	25	67	380	274
Eccup Res	1	20	12	–	–	–	–	636	627	70	22	–
Edderthorpe Flash	15	105	–	–	2	2	60	20	77	–	546	30
Fairburn Ings	200	146	156	144	150	367	259	421	–	264	332	259
Fewston Res	5	234	36	72	80	–	231	179	1	137	148	23
Flasks Lake	179	26	45	20	20	–	30	250	135	295	160	–
Gouthwaite Res	405	425	309	263	207	353	255	374	357	474	366	408
Hay–a–Park GP	125	44	12	7	6	60	96	30	214	144	193	200
Harewood Park	857	784	639	198	282	388	–	8	–	451	507	230
Hellifield Flash	190	53	6	3	3	–	102	182	–	90	50	117
Hornsea Mere	42	76	87	55	–	–	–	–	128	345	234	–
Lingham Lake	54	227	72	40	29	152	80	150	60	83	204	5
Long Preston	67	445	149	33	28	5	26	169	313	458	577	236
Lower Derwent NNR	573	180	35	88	–	–	–	–	357	589	607	–
North Humber	20	129	151	107	110	–	–	140	544	160	122	6
Nosterfield NR	302	140	64	24	38	52	18	115	14	76	282	440
Old Moor	291	315	320	264	130	365	412	670	598	733	520	497
Otley Wetlands	–	20	16	–	–	77	92	15	8	–	25	36
Potteric Carr	14	5	30	44	62	31	31	124	7	100	2	2
Pugney’s CP	65	150	57	13	7	72	107	37	67	68	156	113
Scaling Dam	1	18	9	10	14	100	46	79	2	81	5	0
South Tees	117	0	18	38	15	55	37	2	252	0	2	0
Swillington Ings	60	47	111	17	32	28	83	348	201	196	108	54
Thrybergh CP	104	83	24	25	–	–	–	–	285	66	75	70
Winterset Res	246	108	45	29	66	149	152	441	366	–	242	315

Some of the higher January counts included 146 at East Park (Hull), 187 were at Peasholm Park, 150 at Horbury Wyke and at least 100 at Marfield Wetlands NR, Bretton Lakes NR and Staveley NR, with 71 at Primrose Valley and 70 at Bretton Lakes NR. In February there were 600 at Ingbirchworth Res on 22nd, 116 at Smallways on 24th, 85 on Seamer Water on 2nd, 81 at Bretton Lake NR on 10th, 80 at Staveley NR on 5th, 75 on Roundhay Park (Leeds) on 14th and 76 at Long Marston (York) on 22nd. Over the summer, there were 100 at Fewston Res on 2nd May and June flocks included 200 on Malham Tarn and 112 at Yeadon Tarn.

Over the summer breeding was reported from many locations and included: Allerthorpe GP (six pairs), Anglers CP (11 pairs, 23 young), Blacktoft Sands, Burton Riggs (two broods), Copgrove Lake, Farnham GP, Gouthwaite Res, Harwood Dale (two broods), Hay-a-Park, John O’ Gaunts Res, Lightwater Valley, Peasholm Park (eight broods), Potteric Carr (13 pairs), Primrose Valley, Pulfin Bog, Rodley NR (six broods, 19 young), Scar Gill Res and at Wykeham Lakes (7 broods). In May a survey of York revealed that there were 144 adults (110 in 2007) and 37 goslings (53 in 2007) divided between seven families.

Post breeding gatherings in August included 670 at Old Moor, 636 at Eccup Res, 500 at Carthick Wood (Leeds), 479 at Royd Moor Res, 421 at Fairburn Ings and 374 at Gouthwaite Res. Smaller counts included 124 at Potteric Carr, 120 at Allerton Bywater and 80 at Filey Dams. In September, there were 350 at Blacktoft Sands, 220 at Peasholm Park, 209 at Smallways and 100 at Kex Gill. A count of 221 at North Cave on 5th October was a site record and elsewhere there were 160 at Scampston on 18th October. A count of 315 at Winterset Res was the highest December count since 2003 and 67 at Rodley NR on 9th December was the highest count there during the year.

Hybrids

There was a very odd, small and dark-looking bird at Wykeham Lakes in March and September, which was thought to be a hybrid involving one of the smaller Canada Goose races. A Bar-headed x Canada Goose hybrid was at Northcliffe Marsh, Flamborough on 20th May.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis* AC2E

Amber list: uncommon migrant and winter visitor Oct – March. Occasional feral breeder

Breeds in east Greenland, Iceland, Svalbard, the Baltic and high arctic Russia, with wintering birds in eastern England from Svalbard and possibly futher east.

Most reports during the year were of lone birds in the company of other goose species. At the start of the year there were singles at Hemlington Lake on 1st January, with one still present on 9th/10th February. Elsewhere six flew past Flamborough on 2nd January, singles were at Bretton Lakes NR on 6th and Pulfin Bog on 28th January; presumably the same was again at Pulfin up to 12th April. In February a single appeared at Blacktoft Sands on 17th and ten were at Bolton-on-Swale GP on 24th. Two long-staying birds were at Farnham GP from January to 4th April and there were two in the Staveley area from 30th January to 7th March. A lone individual was at Ogden Res on 25th March and there were 220 on the Humber at Faxfleet on 25th. The final spring records were birds at East Bolton Moor on 19th April, at Wheldrake Ings on 7th and 10th May and eight flying south past Spurn on 31st May.

The second half of the year began with 30 over Thrybergh CP on 14th September. There were nine at Blacktoft Sands on 17th and lone birds at North Cave and at Wykeham Lakes on 19th and 29th September.

Perhaps some of the only genuine records related to a movement that started on 2nd October and occurred during a spell of northerly winds, probably responsible for displacing birds further south than usual. On 2nd South Gare recorded a single, seven were at Scaling Dam, three flew past Flamborough, 32 headed past Filey Brigg and 19 were noted off Spurn. This movement continued the following day when 63 were noted passing Long Nab, eight headed past Flamborough, two flew south past Spurn, while seven birds were also noted flying up the Humber and 18 appeared at Nosterfield NR.

On 4th there were seven at Hay-a-Park, 27 at Scaling Dam, seven were off Ness Point, three flew north at Long Nab, a bird headed past Flamborough and five passed Filey Brigg. Other October records included two at Broomhill Flash on 6th and singles at Nosterfield NR on 10th/11th, at Castle Howard on 14th and Smallways on 18th. Up to three were in the Staveley area from 1st October to the year end and a single resided at Hay-a-Park from mid October to the end of December. Eight fed in stubble fields near Pulfin Bog on 9th November, 33 flew over Thrybergh CP on 5th December and 1-2 were at Hemlington Lake over this period. Finally, up to eight were at North Cave in November and a single associated with Canada Geese at Filey Dams throughout December.

Hybrid

A Snow Goose x Barnacle cross was at Nosterfield NR for most of the year; presumably the same bird was also responsible for sightings at Gouthwaite Res.



BRENT GOOSE *Branta bernicla* A

Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*

Amber list and UK BAP species: uncommon migrant and winter visitor. BBS 1/204

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 2000: GB threshold 981

Breeds in arctic Russia and winters on the southern North Sea coast, in declining numbers over the last decade although numbers of UK wintering birds increased for the third consecutive year, and numbers on the Humber were the highest ever recorded.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Spurn Point	300	544	400	386	154	12	2	1	28	60	181	250
North Humber	47	317	75	75	93	–	–	–	–	–	17	3

Present throughout the year at Spurn, mostly around Long Bank Marsh or in fields to the north. The highest count in January was 612 on 29th, with 722 here on 25th February and 332 on 9th November. Further along the Humber there were 25 at Paull Holme Strays on 22nd January, one was at Blacktoft Sands on 25th February and 105 were near Welwick Pump Station on 14th March.

Coastal passage was light and usually involved small numbers. Early on five flew past Marine Drive, Scarborough on 4th January, four headed past Flamborough on 22nd January, with two off there on 16th and 27th February and one on 29th March. Also in March a single flew north past South Gare on 16th.

In total 85 were recorded heading south and 40 were recorded coming in off the sea at Spurn between 15th September and 8th November. Some of the larger autumn counts include 27 off Spurn on 9th September, 18 passing Flamborough on 13th September and in November there were 49 south past Spurn on 7th. Filey’s peak count of the year related to nine heading north past the Brigg on 23rd November. Elsewhere there were four at South Gare on 29th August, one flew north past Marine Drive on 22nd September, with three past here the following day and there were six birds past Ness Point on 31st October.

Away from the coast, there were four at Southfield Res on 4th/5th January; one was at Filey Dams on 6th, with a single again present on 3rd March. A single resided at Wykeham Lakes from 9th–23rd March and one appeared at Hornsea Mere on 20th April and North Cave and Tophill Low NR on 23rd April. Unusually there were singles at Nosterfield NR on 7th/9th June and at Scalby Lodge Pond/Cromer Point on 29th/30th June. During the autumn, there were two on Hornsea Mere on 15th September and two at Broomhill Flash on 7th October, singles at North Cave on 9th and at Winterset Res on 15th November, with a single at Old Moor on 2nd and two at Southfield Res on 7th December.

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*

Amber list: scarce migrant and winter visitor

A small population from Svalbard of about 3350 wintered at Lindisfarne in the first winter period, probably accounting for overshooting migrants in Yorkshire, although it is possible that some could also have come from the East Canadian population, a few of which winter west of the Pennines and some 28,000 in Northern Ireland.

Most sightings came from Spurn with singles on 13th February and 3rd March and two on 2nd March and 31st March. In April, one was off Flamborough on 25th and lone birds were at Spurn on 27th April and again on 11th/12th and 28th May.

A flock of 19 heading past Flamborough on 7th September were the first to return, with five flying past here the following day and five off Spurn on 10th. Three flew past Flamborough on 13th, two flew south past Long Nab on 14th, when there were three north past Flamborough. On 23rd September two headed north past Marine Drive and three were logged passing Flamborough. Some of the higher counts occurred in October when there were 14 on Bran Sands on 28th while on the last day of the month 29 tracked past South Gare, 22 flew past Ness Point, 14 headed north off Marine Drive and three passed Flamborough. Five headed past Flamborough on 1st November and three passed Spurn on 18th.

Black Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans* 0,0,0,0,1
Vagrant; one previous record

Breeds in Arctic Alaska and North-east Siberia, where its population is expanding westwards, overlapping with the nominate race.

One at Long Bank Marsh on 3rd/4th March (AAH *et al.*) and again on 30th/31st March (JMT *et al.*); only the second record for the county, the last was also at Spurn in early 2001.

EGYPTIAN GOOSE *Alopochen aegyptiaca* C1E* 17,16,14,29,19
Rare visitor from feral populations elsewhere in country/local escape: has occasionally bred.

A feral breeder in the UK since the 18th century, with the main concentration in Norfolk, and colonies also in the Netherlands and Belgium. The national population has doubled since 2000/01.

A single accompanied Canada Geese at Hepworth on 1st January and at Horbury Wyke on 13th/24th January. A pair present at Rother Valley CP had six small goslings in March. April records included a single at Scaling Dam on 9th and two were at Potteric Carr on 15th. In May, one was at Skelton Lake on 14th and one visited Yeadon Tarn on 30th. One appeared at Cowbar in May and remained in the area until early July at least, with presumably the same at Staithes on 17th June, Kettleness on 12th July and Scaling Dam on 9th August. Other August records included one at Lingham Lake on 16th/25th. Six were in a field near Kexby (York) on 24th September and remained until at least 8th October. Also in October there were two at Smallways on 2nd (one was still present on 18th) and a bird was at North Cave from 25th October to 29th November. The only record in December was a bird at Thorganby Ings on 17th. Elsewhere a pinioned bird was at Copgrove Lake (Ripon) for most of the year. In January a known escapee from a wildfowl collection at Saltburn Bank had flown over the fence and was roaming wild at Saltburn on 13th and 27th. In November a bird released by the RSPCA onto Thrybergh CP remained there until the end of the year.

COMMON SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna* A
Amber list: uncommon breeder and fairly common migrant and winter visitor. BBS 9/204
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 3000: GB threshold 782
Nationally has slowly declined since 1997.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Beal Carrs	2	13	5	19	4	2	0	1	4	–	–	–
Blacktoft Sands	36	20	54	45	11	6	14	–	32	11	3	6
Fairburn Ings	–	22	33	41	16	8	2	–	–	–	–	9
Lingham Lake	12	56	29	7	–	24	4	5	2	6	18	19
Lower Derwent NNR	90	96	44	99	–	–	–	–	–	28	6	–
North Cave	7	43	47	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	8
North Humber	3650	1675	2071	903	779	233	1689	2612	2739	1302	1702	1691
Nosterfield NR	11	14	24	20	17	25	20	8	1	3	5	7
Old Moor	2	8	5	4	4	–	–	5	1	–	–	–
Potteric Carr	9	10	12	8	4	12	–	20	–	0	3	7
Smallways	7	27	9	37	28	5	4	–	–	1	2	3
South Tees	173	48	158	102	54	14	54	31	116	132	178	85
Spurn Point	112	62	49	130	20	23	663	435	298	115	82	17
Swillington Ings	22	32	9	8	6	–	7	–	40	–	2	3
Tophill Low	–	7	4	5	10	2	9	–	1	–	–	2

Typically the largest counts occurred along the Humber where there were counts of 532 at Patrington and 330 at Sunk Island in January and 382 at Stone Creek in March. Away from the Humber, there were 90 in the Lower Derwent NNR on 15th January and 20 on Hatfield Moors on 19th January, increasing to 50 there by 3rd February. Six were at Long Preston on 9th March, four were on Anglers CP on 30th April, seven on Pulfin Bog on 29th April, seven on Welton Waters on 7th May and 11 on Newburgh Priory Pond on 19th May.

During the summer, breeding took place on the Tees at Bran Sands, where there were seven broods in July. In the Harrogate area, breeding occurred at Gouthwaite Res, Haddockstones, Lingham Water and at Nosterfield NR. Elsewhere: a pair bred at Tophill Low; two pairs bred (brood of eight and 13) at North Cave; a pair bred at Wilfholme; there was a brood of nine at Southfield Res and breeding took place at the Lower Derwent NNR. In the Leeds area pairs bred at Mickletown Ings, Skelton Lake, Swillington Ings and Woodlesford. Pairs were also present, but breeding not proved at: Filey Dams, Flamborough, Pulfin Bog and Scalby Lodge, Silverwood Pit, Cromer Point (two pairs), Potteric Carr and Spurn.

Coastal passage was recorded during most months, with bests of 11 off Flamborough on 5th January, 12 in Filey Bay on 10th February and ten headed past Flamborough on 12th. Eleven flew east at Spurn on 25th April and a similar number again headed east there on 6th May. Other May records included: five passing Long Nab on 18th and four off Flamborough on 10th. In June, pre-moult movements included six at Flamborough on 5th, 19 south past Spurn on 16th and five passing Filey Brigg on 30th. Elsewhere 31 headed south past Flamborough and 26 went south at Filey on 5th July, while 35 headed past Spurn on 13th. September produced higher counts with: 13 north past Long Nab and 31 south at Spurn on 12th and 44 were logged passing Flamborough the following day.

Post-breeding flocks on the Humber included 960 in the Stone Creek area in August, with a huge count of 1360 present there in September. Patrington attracted 490 in October and 312 were still present in December. Elsewhere, there were eight at Anglers CP on 29th August, 13 on Orgreave Lakes on 1st September and a record site count of 60 at Southfield Res on 14th September. Six over Thrybergh CP on 11th October constituted the last notable inland record.

MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata* C1E*
Scarce feral breeder/local escape/visitor from populations elsewhere in country
Britain’s largely sedentary feral population has increased. There is some evidence of seasonal migration in late March to May and October/November, but local introductions, especially at Harewood Park, may mostly account for the county’s increasing feral population.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Harewood Park	11	24	12	9	4	–	15	25	–	44	26	18
Strid Wood	–	–	5	4	5	2	–	–	–	4	6	–

Most reports came from strongholds in the west, especially from along the river Wharfe in the Bolton Abbey/Strid Wood area, or from along the river Don around Sheffield. Another small population is present in the north of the county, around the Scarborough area.

At the start of the year, a single was at Hackness Lake (Scarborough) from 2nd–6th January, a female was at Crookes Valley Park (Sheffield) from 3rd–29th and a drake was at Rother Valley CP during January. Elsewhere, a single was on Bolton-on-Swale GP on 13th, a pair were on the river Wharfe at Ilkley from 22nd –28th February, two were at Burton Fleming on 23rd and a female was at Withernsea. In February, five visited Hackness Lake on 10th and there were two at Gleadless Valley NR on 16th. In March, there were four from Hackness Lake on 11th and seven were on the river Wharfe between Barden Bridge and Howgill on 30th. Away from these strongholds, wandering birds were at Lindley Wood Res on 9th March. In April there were five at the Valley of Desolation on 7th and lone males were at Potteric Carr on 9th, Locke Park (Redcar) on 12th, Wheldrake Ings from 23rd to 25th. A male was at Nicholson’s Lagoon on 28th and at Harthill Res over 24th/25th April. Elsewhere a pair visited West Scafton on 9th, a female dropped in at Filey Dams on 11th and a pair was at Harthill Res on 20th April.

By May most birds were back on breeding areas, with four at Hilla Green and a pair on the river at Low North Camp (both in the Scarborough area) on 12th. Elsewhere four were on Eccup Res on 14th and three were at West Scafton on 21st. Lone drakes made brief visits to Thrybergh CP on 4th and Castle Howard on 6th, with a single at Wheldrake Ings from 3rd–9th. Singles frequented Scalby Beck at Mowthorpe on 3rd May (and again on 21st) and the Valley of Desolation on 4th. A pair resided at Priory Pond (Guisborough) from 10th February to the year end and had been released.

The only record away from the breeding areas during the summer was of a female at Blacktoft on 12th June. Breeding was confirmed in the Scarborough area at both Hilla Green (at least four young) and at Troutsdale (six juveniles present in August). Further west breeding was confirmed at Eccup Res and at Harewood Park, where the population is thought to be expanding.

In August, an eclipse male was at Potteric Carr from 15th–17th, with presumably the same present on 10th September and 23rd October. Up to five were at Farnham GP from 22nd August to 2nd September. Elsewhere in September there were six at Dewsbury on 10th, four at Graves Parks on 14th while a male was at Pennyholme Marsh on 11th and a female was at Sandhall Park, Doncaster on 23rd/24th September. Wandering birds appeared at Speeton from 10th–15th October, Smallways on 11th October, a male at Harthill Res 22nd, a male at Gallows Hill NR on 24th, one visited Blackmoorfoot Res on 19th and one was at Farnham GP on 31st. In November, a male was at Meltham on 2nd and at Graves Park on 16th, with two birds present on 14th December. Other December records included a male at Southfield Res on 6th (third site record) and singles at Knotford Nook on 7th and Pearson Park on 14th. During the year birds were also known to have been present at Adel Res (where a bird was noted feeding from a bird table), Farnley Balance Res, Gallow’s Hill, Golden Acre Park, Hetchell Woods and Lindley Wood Res.

WIGEON *Anas penelope* **A**
Amber list: rare breeder; common migrant and winter visitor
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 15000: GB threshold 4060
Breeds across northern Europe and Asia, wintering to the south.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Blacktoft Sands	500	220	103	2	–	5	–	–	46	2	150	130
Bolton–on–Swale	454	475	460	49	–	2	–	–	41	180	302	340
Castle Howard	200	101	50	3	–	–	–	–	41	195	255	205
Eccup Res	439	514	492	–	–	–	–	–	–	30	–	320
Edderthorpe Flash	127	134	–	–	–	–	2	–	120	140	130	109
Fairburn Ings	–	134	135	15	–	–	–	3	–	266	54	82
Hay–a–Park GP	174	178	129	–	–	–	–	–	43	68	107	177
Hellifield Flash	647	106	216	38	–	–	–	–	81	144	71	483
Hornsea Mere	215	295	195	177	–	–	–	–	34	245	225	–
Long Preston	444	756	708	56	1	1	–	–	66	113	300	400
Lower Derwent NNR	11600	6268	3525	1325	–	–	–	–	1894	3061	5075	–
North Humber	2107	2760	2780	278	–	–	–	–	896	891	1674	1063
Nosterfield NR	1028	1170	693	114	8	5	6	43	190	300	450	650
Old Moor	743	668	620	32	6	3	–	7	208	244	344	440
Pulfin Bog	385	440	370	6	0	0	0	1	40	70	250	360
Smallways	184	122	47	22	5	–	–	–	54	69	79	61
South Tees	94	42	7	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	8	7
Swillington Ings	66	256	30	8	2	–	–	5	210	32	148	287
Tophill Low	880	880	749	14	2	2	1	1	144	524	303	600
Winterset Res	179	274	190	37	0	0	0	2	77	132	184	156

Large flocks were reported from many sites including Scalby Lodge, where there were 550 on 4th January (and 278 still in February) and 200 at Welwick pump station on 15th January. At least 100 were present at Staveley NR on 5th February, at Carthick Wood (Leeds) on 9th and in Filey Bay on 17th February. Good numbers were also present at Weel Pond with 85 here on 6th February, 90 were at Seamer Water on 2nd and 75 were at Grimwith Res on 12th. There were 56 at Wighill Ings on 26th January, 52 at Knotford Nook on 5th January, with 54 still present on 17th March. Sixty were at Brough Airfield on 10th February, Filey Dams held 71 on 17th February, but by far the greatest concentrations occurred in the Lower Derwent Valley, with 11,600 present in January, reducing to 3525 by March.

A number of sites held birds over the summer, though breeding was only confirmed at two locations in the Vale of York.

Small numbers were recorded on coastal passage off Spurn from the beginning of August and from mid September off Scarborough. Most passage was light, though it peaked in September when there were 479 off Spurn on 11th, with 713 flying past there on 12th and 453 on 13th. Elsewhere 190 tracked north off Marine Drive on 22nd, when 262 were recorded passing Filey Brigg. In October 765 flew past Spurn on 8th, with 259 passing there on 18th and 172 flew north past Marine Drive on 31st. The only substantial count in November related to 419 passing Spurn on 9th.

Some of the larger flocks in the final quarter of the year included: 180 at Cayton Carr on 13th and 80 at Wykeham Lakes on 19th September. In October there were 165 at Scalby Lodge on 8th and 56 at Scaling Dam. December’s tallies included 101 at Catwick GP, 120 at Wykeham Lakes and 74 at Harewood Park on 14th, 320 at Scalby Lodge and at least 50 at Knotford Nook and 40 at Seamer Water. However, the Lower Derwent Valley again provided the focus, with aggregations totalling 1894 in September increasing to 5075 by November.

AMERICAN WIGEON *Anas americana* **A** 1,0,2,1,1
Extremely rare visitor; 20 previous records
Breeds through North America south to the mid–west and winters as far south as Colombia. An annual rare visitor to the UK.

A drake at Pulfin Bog on 27th January (DGH) and Tophill Low NR four days later (EJH et al.) was presumed to relate to one of the returning birds present during the 2006–7 winter. A first for the Sheffield area, a drake then took up temporary residence at Rother Valley CP from 23rd April to 1st May and showed well to a steady succession of admirers (MNR *et al.*).

GADWALL *Anas strepera* **AC**
Amber list: uncommon resident breeder; winter visitor and passage migrant. BBS 1/204
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 600: GB threshold 171
Has increased nationally and locally for thirty years.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Catcliffe Flash	15	37	26	24	–	–	–	–	13	9	6	7
Edderthorpe Flash	71	17	–	–	12	81	35	37	214	151	95	18
Fairburn Ings	40	45	50	40	27	63	65	192	218	218	91	24
Hay–a–Park	39	12	6	2	4	–	2	14	13	25	34	44
Hornsea Mere	116	165	177	165	–	–	–	–	187	190	185	–
Lower Derwent NNR	144	171	69	75	–	–	–	–	35	114	104	–
North Humber	143	140	96	20	46	–	8	112	33	60	93	153
North Cave	14	36	17	–	–	–	–	–	–	34	27	12
Nosterfield NR	4	10	26	16	17	37	9	43	42	67	38	8
Old Moor	90	128	138	156	116	239	87	208	124	81	89	83
Rodley NR	32	9	8	6	2	2	2	5	12	27	20	18
Potteric Carr	46	101	54	26	39	27	4	98	101	209	188	51
Southfield Res	22	24	16	12	11	5	12	7	6	4	11	23
South Tees	39	13	22	2	0	0	0	0	0	5	51	6
Swillington Ings	69	119	226	154	53	137	–	11	47	95	159	76
Thrybergh CP	–	15	11	11	13	–	–	–	9	5	30	35
Tophill Low	51	34	89	27	25	49	24	79	34	24	48	59
Winterset Res	76	46	30	16	9	3	1	9	26	40	106	51

In January there were 127 at Saltmarshe Delph on 22nd, 30 on Sprotbrough Flash on 11th, 27 at Scampston Park, while 19 at Ulley CP was a site record. Elsewhere there were up to 18 at Welton Waters, 17 at Kingswood Res on 25th, 15 at Blacktoft Sands on 14th, seven at Filey Dams on 19th and seven at Blackburn Meadows NR on 21st. Some of the larger counts in February include up to 20 at Scampston Park, 16 at Pulfin Bog, 15 at Filey Dams, ten at Londesbrough and up to eight at Bolton–on–Swale. In March, there were 247 at Skelton Lake, seven at both Blacktoft on 10th and at Pugney’s CP on 31st.

Breeding was proved at Aldwarke SW, Edderthorpe Flash (seven broods), Farnham GP (two pairs), Flasks Lake and at the Lower Derwent NNR, where 26 pairs bred. In addition it also bred at North Cave (five pairs), Potteric Carr (seven pairs), Southfield Res, Swillington Ings (seven pairs), Thrybergh CP (37 young) and at Tophill Low (five broods).

Coastal passage usually involved no more than two and included: two south past Filey on 3rd January, with a single flying past Flamborough on 12th February and two south passing Spurn and Flamborough on 30th March. In April two flew past Filey Brigg on 25th and singles headed past Flamborough on 24th and 27th. In May, a pair flew past Filey Brigg on 4th May and singles were noted passing Spurn on 5th and Flamborough on 10th. Three tracked past Spurn on 22nd June and one came in off there on 27th June.

In July, singles flew past Flamborough on 3rd and 11th, when a bird was also noted passing Spurn and five flew past Spurn on 14th. One flew past Flamborough on 11th August, with nine off the headland on 25th. In September one flew south at Spurn on 10th, with a pair north past here on the 12th, when three were also recorded passing Skinningrove. There were five south past Spurn on 13th September and up to two were recorded on four dates at Flamborough. October's passage was confined to two south at Spurn on 7th, but activity increased in November: nine went south and two north at Spurn on 7th, with eight recorded heading south past there the following day. Two flew past Flamborough on 16th and four tracked past the headland on 19th November. The only coastal passage noted in December related to two south past Spurn on 16th.

Some of the higher counts during the final half of the year included 12 at Lowther Lake and eight at Skelton Lake in July, and in August there were 20 on Mickletown Ings on 17th, 14 on Skelton Lake, nine at Carlton Marsh and up to eight at Blacktoft Sands. In September there were 17 at Beal Carrs, 16 at Mickletown Ings, 12 on Lowther Lake, eight on Catcliffe Flash and up to five on both Bolton-on-Swale and Pugney's CP.

In October, Allerton Bywater held 58 on 19th, 31 were on Lowther Lake on 19th, 20 at Scampston, 18 at Treeton Dyke, 15 at Ripon Race Course on 19th, 14 at Pulfin Bog, ten at Walton Hall Lake and eight at Castle Howard. November records included: 23 at Welbeck Washlands on 22nd, 21 at Ripon Race Course on 16th, 17 at Pugney's CP on 16th, 13 at Beal Carr's on 16th and eight at Leventhorpe. In the final month of the year there were up to 32 on Mickletown Ings, 19 on Treeton Dyke, 12 on Filey Dams, up to eight at Bolton-on-Swale and seven at Catcliffe Flash.

TEAL *Anas crecca* **A**

Amber list: rare breeder; fairly common migrant and winter visitor. BBS 2/204

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 5000: GB threshold 1920

Breeds from Iceland east to Siberia, with a small British population. Numbers wintering in the county can fluctuate annually quite dramatically, probably depending on weather conditions on the continent, but the overall trend has been upwards.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Blacktoft Sands	250	192	16	23	–	17	35	62	2000	367	1425	1100
Beal Carrs	105	200	50	10	3	1	1	13	125	36	42	220
Cononley Ings	189	73	163	37	1	0	12	12	130	150	150	150
Edderthorpe Flash	136	78	–	–	2	2	–	107	400	110	234	177
Fairburn Ings	80	157	117	50	1	33	44	39	–	340	264	394
Filey Dams	85	26	–	16	–	–	–	14	43	169	25	–
Gouthwaite Res	332	168	81	34	16	25	30	43	800	488	527	169
Hellifield Flash	48	10	6	8	–	–	–	–	7	34	37	30
Hornsea Mere	566	352	56	76	–	–	–	–	225	110	132	1000
Long Preston	115	165	212	202	–	1	2	120	54	140	48	72
Lower Derwent NNR	3616	3714	1589	796	–	–	–	–	1318	2505	2487	–
North Cave	221	118	36	–	–	–	–	–	–	198	227	184
North Humber	1776	536	465	141	21	3	–	97	283	197	1528	994
Nosterfield NR	625	480	167	65	6	25	3	110	451	196	325	839
Old Moor	299	203	136	66	6	21	47	328	185	265	279	641
Potteric Carr	303	57	42	40	–	2	9	18	30	99	101	127
Pulfin & High Eske	120	–	75	30	–	3	2	19	30	1	12	180
Scaling Dam	341	125	24	10	3	5	5	10	46	114	135	148
Southfield Res	110	29	84	33	3	1	1	3	17	60+	8	111
South Tees	163	64	81	10	0	0	0	9	27	78	103	80
Swillington Ings	109	296	248	45	–	13	–	21	87	177	184	283
Tophill Low	430	109	51	29	–	10	11	114	319	351	584	350

Maximum site counts included January totals of: 156 at Eccup Res, 114 at Filey Dams, 135 at Scalby Lodge, 180 at Scampston Lake, 100 at Skipton SW, 300 at Hatfield Moors, 303 at Potteric Carr, 64 at Snaygill Ings, 60 at Wykeham Lakes and 54 at Welton Waters/Brough. February aggregations included: 105 near Howe Bridge, 41 at Horbury Lake, 71 at Eccup Res, 62 Skelton Lake and 42 at Smallways. In March there were up to 144 along the river Aire between Skipton and Cononley Ings and 208 on the Humber off Spurn in thick fog on 27th.

Over the summer small numbers were reported from several sites including Catcliffe Flash, Harthill Res, Staveley, North Cave NR, Old Moor, Nosterfield NR and at Wintersett Res, though the only evidence of breeding came from Scaling Dam, where there were two broods.

It was an excellent autumn for offshore passage at Spurn, with a total of 8194 south, 162 north and 14 in off between 17th June and 31st December. Coastal passage started in June, but was more evident from August when 301 headed past Long Nab and 507 flew south off Spurn on 17th, with 645 south past Filey Brigg and 406 past Spurn the following day. A further 183 flew past Ness Point on 30th August. Passage peaked in September when there were 692 past Spurn on 10th, with 930 passing there on 11th. The following day brought counts of 335 flying past Long Nab and 499 heading past Spurn. On 13th 510 flew south off Filey Brigg, while 1440 went south at Spurn. Larger numbers continued to be counted passing through Spurn in November, with 340 on 8th and 630 on 9th; the final notable count related to 269 tracking past Spurn on 13th December.

In the final half of the year there were 165 on a flooded field near Barmby Moor (York), 275 on floodwaters at Cayton Carr, 150 at Ganton and 50 at Skipton SW in September. October produced counts of 164 at Eccup Res, 243 at Filey Dams and 70 at Scampston Lake. In November there were 176 at Potteric Carr and December produced totals of 102 at Harewood Park, 250 Scalby Lodge, 124 Smallways and 180 Wykeham Lake.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL *Anas carolinensis* **A**

3,3,2,3,5

Rare autumn and winter visitor from North America; 60 previous records

Breeds across North America and winters in southern USA, Central America and the West Indies, but a regular British visitor.

Presumed a returning bird from early 2007 a drake was re-discovered at North Duffield Carrs on 27th March (PCR), but was very elusive and was only seen intermittently during the rest of the month; almost certainly the same visited Wheldrake Ings on 7th and 22nd April (CSR *et al.*). Elsewhere a drake on Long Bank Marsh, Kilnsea on 12th April remained in situ until 3rd May and represented the first record for the Spurn area (LJD *et al.*). Amazingly it was joined by another male on 27th/28th April (JMT *et al.*).

In November a partial eclipse drake photographed at North Cave on 9th (RA *et al.*) was a first for the reserve. The next day drakes were at Wheldrake Ings (presumed returning individual) and at Blacktoft Sands, with the latter present occasionally until at least 20th December. The year ended with yet another drake at Old Moor on 29th/30th December, which then relocated to Broomhill Flash on New Year's Eve (JHe *et al.*).



MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos* **AC**

Amber list: fairly common breeder; common migrant and winter visitor

BBS 111/204: +28% (+32) 1994–2008, +7% (+1) 2007–08

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 20000: GB threshold 3520

There continues to be a long-term decline in winter numbers based on WeBS, possibly due to decreased immigration. The number of released birds may be causing the slight increases shown in BBS figures since 1996.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Beal Carrs	110	235	130	48	91	67	187	430	175	108	168	95
Blacktoft Sands	48	42	66	15	34	84	–	540	35	22	81	90
Castle Howard	177	83	73	45	39	156	221	199	179	185	228	163
Edderthorpe Flash	350	197	–	–	60	60	70	240	430	385	330	177
Fairburn Ings	–	320	206	173	162	373	456	284	–	531	315	324
Gouthwaite Res	553	313	159	85	105	125	264	231	447	524	729	410
Harewood Park	232	167	37	64	86		145	132		272	361	176
Hornsea Mere	260	310	310	210	–	–	–	–	455	505	350	–
Lingham Lake	176	131	27	11	18	15	15	157	104	92	141	173
Lower Derwent NNR	1245	1272	728	586	–	–	–	–	1386	1265	1270	–
North Cave	94	110	44	–	–	–	–	–	–	223	213	166
North Humber	2124	1381	1059	314	298	155	114	1238	822	783	1107	1090
Nosterfield NR	133	125	64	45	86	55	103	167	167	240	230	122
Ogden Res	92	62	61	68	40	53	83	67	55	65	70	52
Old Moor	305	158	249	131	70	181	215	449	326	192	321	306
Potteric Carr	324	133	59	50	86	103	168	106	103	108	73	116
Pulfin Bog	300	160	65	–	–	–	150	233	318	235	225	273
Rodley NR	70	28	37	32	26	76	132	114	100	26	17	18
Scaling Dam	246	94	15	4	38	34	33	61	165	136	245	215
Southfield Res	400	430+	152	70	47	90	101	38	400+	450+	600	668
South Tees	35	28	18	11	19	14	23	16	18	24	20	49
Swillington Ings	91	97	104	57	84	11	62	149	72	146	114	137
Tophill Low	365	110	90	92	62	304	108	510	490	431	266	278
Winterset Res	65	74	47	35	45	42	83	161	240	96	106	102
Yeadon Tarn	175	98	120	84	107	156	119	170	257	135	128	140

Maximum site counts early on included in January: 128 at Burton Fleming, 310 Dale Dyke Res, 700 at Grimwith Res, 80 at Kelk Lake, 289 at Leighton Res, 101 at Pickering Park, 150 at Pugney’s CP, 119 at Roundhay Park and 180 at Semer Water. In February there were 136 at Holmfirth and 100 at Long Preston, with March counts of 146 on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Riddleston and 138 at Winscar Res.

Post breeding gatherings include 112 Farnley Res, 161 at Riddlesden, 108 at Pugney’s CP, 132 at Rodley NR and 152 at Winscar Res in July and 114 at Pugney’s CP, 128 at Long Preston and 157 at Winscar Res in August. During September there were 106 at Elsecar Res, 121 at Hellifield Flash, 200 at Ripon Race Course, 120 at Seamer Water, 210 at Dale Dyke Res and 109 at Roundhay Park (Leeds). Maximum site counts in the last three months of the year included 300 on Hatfield Moors, 145 at Settrington Lake, 223 at North Cave, 105 at Long Preston and 153 at Treeton Dyke in October. November produced 465 at Dale Dyke Res, 136 at Lindley Wood Res, 200 at Sherburn Mills, 168 at Catwick GP, 104 at Eccup Res, 147 at Elsecar Res and 141 at Farnley Res. In December, Golden Acre Park held 138 and there were 395 at Semer Water, 146 at Bolton–on– Swale GP, 166 at Riddlesden, 150 at Winscar Res and 118 at Smallways.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta* A

Amber list: rare breeder, uncommon migrant and winter visitor.

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 600: GB threshold 279

Nationally, numbers have been fairly stable.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	124	62	75	4	–	–	–	3	12	10	25	177
Lower Derwent NNR	273	674	259	59	–	–	–	–	20	50	85	–
Long Preston	48	300	45	–	–	–	–	–	4	6	28	2

Larger monthly counts over the first three months included: in January, 32 at Blacktoft on 4th, five at Hellifield Flash on 16th and also in the Aire Valley on 19th, four around Cononley Ings, six in the Snaygill Ings area and 13 flew west over Nosterfield NR on 20th. Up to seven were in residence at Potteric Carr throughout January and four were at Pulfin Bog on 27th.

In February there were seven at Southfield Res on 4th (with three pairs here on 24th), seven at Swillington Ings and on 24th, six were at Skipton SW on 9th, five at Skelton Lake on 24th, four at Blacktoft on 28th and threes at Pulfin Bog on 4th, Brough Airfield on 10th and Lockwood Beck on 19th. In March, there were 12 at Brough Airfield on 9th, five at Anglers CP on 24th and four at Welton Waters on 23rd.

Passage along the coast was light in the early months. Two flew past Spurn on New Year’s Day, one headed past Filey on 19th, two flew past Spurn on 20th with another six through Spurn on 9th February. Autumn passage started at Spurn from the end of July and peaked in September, with 302 south between July and November. Maximum counts include 30 flying past Spurn on 20th August, with 59 through on 1st September, 47 heading past on 11th and 33 passing Spurn on 13th September. Elsewhere, Flamborough logged 22 on 28th September and five flew past Filey on 27th December.

In the final half of the year, there were five at Rother Valley CP on 24th August and three at Blacktoft on 18th. In September 19 were at Patrington Haven on 12th, Wykeham Lakes hosted ten on 19th, eight visited Smallways on 10th and six were at both Blacktoft on 15th and at Anglers CP on 30th. In October there were up to 14 at Swillington Ings, seven at Anglers CP on 10th (with five here on 27th), four dropped in at Southfield Res on 10th and four visited Flasks on 15th. In November there were counts of up to 15 at both Southfield Res and at Swillington Ings, with 23 present at Swillington Ings in December and up to five at Potteric Carr.

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula* A

Amber list: rare breeding summer visitor and scarce migrant March – October

A pair at North Cave on 26th February was very early and the next were two at Bishop Monkton (Ripon) on 19th March, followed by a drake at Filey Dams on 21st (to 20th April). The next appeared at North Duffield Carrs on 25th March and remained the next day.

April records included: three drakes on floodwater near the river Calder at Horbury and a drake at Potteric Carr on 17th. There were regular sightings at Wheldrake Ings where five (three drakes) were present on 21st April. The following day a single arrived at Blacktoft Sands, with another at Flasks Lake and a drake visited Canal Scrape at Spurn on 23rd, when up to three were at Old Moor. On 26th Fairburn Ings attracted a drake and a pair headed south past Spurn on 28th, the same day as a pair was recorded at Swine Moor (male still present on 29th). April ended with a drake at North Cave on 30th. In May singles appeared at Anglers CP, Beal Carrs, Blacktoft Sands, Broomhill Flash, Edderthorpe Flash, Flasks Lake, Hornsea Mere, Lingham Lake, Nosterfield NR, Potteric Carr, Pugney’s CP, Sand Hutton, South Gare, Spurn, Swillington Ings, Swine Moor, Treeton Dyke, Winterset Res and at Wombwell Ings. In the Lower Derwent Valley birds were present at Bank Island, North Duffield Carrs and at Wheldrake Ings.

Breeding is always difficult to prove, but there were five broods in the Lower Derwent Valley and breeding was also suspected at a site in the Harrogate area.

In July, there were regular sightings of a drake at Blacktoft Sands and in August up to three visited Potteric Carr. Two were at Thorganby Ings on 24th August and singles appeared at Rother Valley CP on 16th, at Old Moor on 17th, Wombwell Ings on 20th, Broomhill Flash on 28th/29th August, Swillington Ings on 30th/31st and Skelton Lake on 31st August.

In September there were birds at Wheldrake Ings and Tophill Low on 5th, Blacktoft Sands on 12th on which date one flew south off Flamborough. There were singles on 14th at Hornsea Mere, Potteric Carr, Swillington Ings, Old Moor (the latter also present on 17th/18th) at Staveley NR on 15th and at Wheldrake Ings on 20th. Two visited North Cave on 25th and Swillington Ings hosted a single on 27th/28th. A first–winter drake lingered at Rother Valley CP from 29th September to 6th October. Additional October records included singles at Swillington Ings from 4th–27th, at Edderthorpe Flash on 11th and at Blacktoft Sands on 31st. A single on Hornsea Mere was unseasonal on 20th November, with a female at Old Moor from 24th–28th December more so.

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata* A

Amber list: scarce breeder; fairly common migrant and winter visitor. BBS 1/204

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 400: GB threshold 148

The wintering population appears to be stable.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Blacktoft Sands	56	21	7	8	3	29	9	36	89	52	15	17
Catcliffe Flash	11	4	24	–	–	–	–	–	8	7	12	5
Edderthorpe Flash	59	17	–	–	2	3	6	121	210	130	31	8
Fairburn Ings	–	31	54	25	10	38	17	106	–	279	304	297
Hellifield Flash	17	10	9	3	–	–	–	–	5	22	30	11
Hornsea Mere	45	87	54	45	–	–	–	–	155	145	126	44
Lower Derwent NNR	171	308	341	211	–	–	–	–	68	333	88	–
North Humber	2	7	2	11	–	–	1	9	–	–	–	1
North Cave	25	21	21	–	–	–	–	–	–	27	15	4
Nosterfield NR	6	5	16	26	6	15	11	5	105	99	83	67
Old Moor	35	34	45	25	18	22	24	56	101	63	35	47
Potteric Carr	73	41	57	32	7	7	4	41	48	51	99	22
Pulfin Bog	27	10	3	8	2	–	3	8	3	14	25	13
South Tees	7	0	2	0	0	0	4	9	0	4	6	4
Swillington Ings	37	43	31	38	29	2	–	8	104	383	63	37
Thrybergh Tip	–	6	6	1	–	–	–	–	45	46	11	13
Tophill Low	8	13	32	10	4	12	23	51	70	73	84	91
Winterset Res	26	7	1	5	2	2	5	19	37	123	73	61

January records included 30 on Hatfield Moors, 13 at both Horbury Wyke and Kingswood Res, 12 at Pugney’s CP, ten at Welton Waters, eight at Sprotbrough Flash and six at Staveley NR (with ten present there in February). Other February counts included up to 39 at Flasks Lake (Ripon), nine at Broomhill Flash and seven were on the Humber at Brough Haven. Numbers at Bransholme SW peaked at 29 on 12th March.

Over the summer, two broods were produced at North Cave and pairs bred successfully for the first time at both Potteric Carr (brood of four in June) and Southfield Res (brood of seven in July). Elsewhere two pairs bred at Swillington Ings and a pair probably attempted to breed at Edderthorpe Flash. Three pairs at Thrybergh Tip produced one brood. Five pairs at Nosterfield NR produced only two broods, while 17 pairs bred in the Lower Derwent. A number of other sites also reported summering pairs.

Seawatching tallies were generally low, but involved three flying past Flamborough on 1st and 5th January, four off Flamborough on 6th September and 11 passing Spurn on 31st October. Activity intensified in early November, with 12 flying past Spurn and 11 passing Filey on 8th, nine flew past Spurn on 14th, with a similar tally noted off Filey on 15th December.

There were up to seven at Filey Dams in July and eight at Scalby Lodge Pond over 1st/2nd August. Five were at Willerby on 9th September, 11 at Smallways on 4th September, five at Flasks Lake through September/October, and five at Rodley NR in December.

RED-CRESTED POCHARD *Netta rufina* AC2E* 20,16,8,12,42
Rare migrant; escapes from captivity and feral birds confuse status.

This species breeds in southern Europe and from Germany east to the Black and Caspian seas. Many are kept in wildfowl collections, with a feral population in the Thames Valley of over 300 birds and these probably account for most, if not all the reports.

A better showing than in recent years, starting with singles near Bradford on 19th January and at Pugney’s CP on 24th. A female was at East Park, Hull from 6th January to 28th March, though it spoiled its credentials by taking bread. A drake visited Hornsea Mere on 8th February, with another single at Otley Wetlands on 14th March and a drake at Rother Valley CP on 21st April. In May drakes were noted at Brough Airfield on 8th, with perhaps the same at Blacktoft Sands on 11th.

Typically, from the end of June there was an upsurge in records starting with two at Yeadon Tarn on 26th. In July there were three at North Cave from the 14th–19th and a drake was on the river Ribble at Halton West on 16th. Other July sightings included a drake at Fairburn Ings on 18th with numbers increasing here to six from 20th July, with five still present on 17th August. Two eclipse drakes were on Swillington Ings from 21st–25th August, with perhaps the same at Anglers CP on 1st September.

A female/immature was at Potteric Carr from 14th September to at least 1st October. An eclipse drake took up temporary residence on Yeadon Tarn from 18th September, where it was briefly joined a second on the 20th; what was presumably the same drake was again present from 3rd October to 19th December. Five visited Tophill Low

on 20th September. Old Moor hosted a drake on 25th September and another stayed at Catcliffe Flash from 24th September to 5th October. Other October records included: a drake at Ulley CP from 2nd–5th; a female at Watton NR from 6th–10th; a drake at Thrybergh CP on 10th; a female on Potteric Carr from 11th–28th; a drake at Langold Lake and another on Doncaster Lakeside on 30th. Hornsea Mere attracted a drake on 20th/21st December. The year’s final record involved a drake at Edderthorpe Flash on 26th December, which then moved to Winterset Res the following day, before it then relocated to Anglers CP where it remained until the end of the year.



POCHARD *Aythya ferina* A
Amber list: scarce breeder; fairly common migrant and winter visitor
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 3500: GB threshold 595

Breeds across northern Eurasia, including eastern Britain, but the declining wintering population was nationally at second lowest for 40 years, and this pattern was replicated in the county.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Beal Carrs	54	36	15	2	5	2	1	1	28	7	1	8
Blacktoft Sands	18	25	1	20	3	24	10	19	–	–	–	–
Bolton-on-Swale	84	149	23	–	–	1	8	25	19	81	29	136
Castle Howard	150	49	60	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	3	24
Edderthorpe Flash	27	33	–	–	–	–	–	48	2	32	27	10
Fairburn Ings	30	90	71	39	11	43	49	60	–	182	147	85
Hay-a-Park GP	137	30	22	1	1	1	1	1	4	2	6	29
Hornsea Mere	455	650	350	210	–	–	–	–	560	510	410	–
Lingham Lake	64	6	13	–	–	–	1	13	6	32	39	2
Lower Derwent NNR	103	87	6	1	–	–	–	–	33	–	–	–
North Cave	21	13	14	–	–	–	–	–	–	11	28	3
North Humber	283	218	372	101	101	2	3	59	11	10	95	144
Nosterfield NR	13	26	3	–	2	1	–	1	18	14	24	2
Old Moor	11	32	20	8	9	1	2	4	20	47	4	–
Potteric Carr	111	102	18	9	8	15	15	4	67	41	74	50
Pugney’s CP	157	37	–	–	–	8	7	47	7	19	24	34
Rother Valley CP	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	46	210
South Tees	3	9	6	0	0	0	0	0	3	6	6	7
Southfield Res	147	26	23	0	3	6	2	1	20	42	130	151
Swillington Ings	98	68	4	2	6	3	11	3	65	46	103	97
Tophill Low NR	34	45	40	8	14	30	60	74	83	3	–	–
Welton Waters	328	170	258	72	23	–	–	–	–	–	4	42
Winterset Res	38	43	21	12	6	1	5	13	41	30	26	72

Many sites reported much lower than average numbers, in keeping with national trends. In January there were 157 in the Skelton Lake to Lowther Lake area, 147 at Southfield Res, 100 on Hatfield Moors, 100+ at Wheldrake Ings, 30 at Staveley, 12 at Otley Wetlands, 20 at North Cave, 30 at Malham Tarn and 11 at Wykeham Lakes. February counts included 81 at Thrybergh CP, 50 at Staveley GP, 70 at Golden Acre Park (Leeds) and 50 at Doncaster Lakeside.

Breeding records included: a brood of eight at Blacktoft Sands; three broods at Potteric Carr; a single duckling at Filey Dams (first site breeding record). Seven pairs bred at Tophill Low and a pair bred at another locality. Breeding was also suspected to have taken place at Winterset Res, though the stronghold remains the Swillington Ings area, where there were five broods totalling 22 young.

Coastal passage was light mostly involving singles, though five flew past Flamborough on 1st January, while 11 flew past there on 20th July. Elsewhere 14 were on the mouth of the Humber on 27th March and six flew past Spurn on 7th December. In total Spurn logged 19 south between 14th September and 7th December.

Higher counts in the second half of the year included 11 on Mickletown Ings in August, 118 at Rother Valley CP in October, and 102 in the Skelton Lake area, 30 at Malham Tarn and ten at Otley Wetlands in November. December's best included 151 at Southfield Res on 12th and 210 at Rother Valley CP.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula* **A**

Amber list: uncommon breeder; fairly common migrant and winter visitor. BBS 11/204

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 12000: GB threshold 901

The breeding and wintering populations appear to be increasing in line with national trends.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Anglers CP	99	120	62	29	6	9	12	96	43	197	91	49
Beal Carrs	58	47	50	55	29	25	3	22	38	34	28	23
Castle Howard	68	72	66	66	34	16	25	52	33	39	78	128
Fairburn Ings	30	221	155	173	54	80	260	528	–	313	190	141
Gouthwaite Res	11	12	30	25	20	70	81	91	64	19	28	15
Hay–a–Park GP	58	32	23	–	–	–	–	–	23	52	61	48
Hornsea Mere	370	550	410	320	–	–	–	–	710	600	590	–
Lingham Lake	33	30	30	17	17	26	49	75	107	64	14	14
Lower Derwent NNR	116	162	107	136	–	–	–	–	323	36	43	–
North Humber	443	216	304	117	114	–	–	184	98	88	161	255
North Cave	73	87	30	–	–	–	–	–	–	30	59	8
Nosterfield NR	31	31	41	59	77	54	35	26	32	68	79	29
Old Moor	96	142	162	130	2	227	206	206	45	63	176	89
Potteric Carr	78	50	90	–	66	–	–	–	40	32	35	32
Pugney's CP	83	31	29	34	8	13	31	41	32	18	43	27
Pulfin & High Eske	40	5	–	12	28	15	15	12	10	42	63	58
Rodley NR	41	43	20	12	17	6	6	1	6	14	18	30
Scaling Dam	20	20	20	22	20	56	34	31	27	16	10	22
South Tees	8	16	13	15	11	1	14	32	40	14	12	11
Southfield Res	39	24	20	17	25	26	33	14	10	37	36	62
Swillington Ings	374	735	701	355	260	370	–	184	251	291	497	1040
Thrybergh CP	80	133	40	22	–	–	–	–	21	43	89	255
Tophill Low	139	158	202	344	54	179	440	970	320	331	302	325
Winterset Res	103	43	62	160	29	46	106	155	142	118	126	116

Most counts were of less than 60, although the Aire Valley held impressive numbers during the first four months of the year, with up to 985 present. Maximum site counts in January included: 107 at Skelton Lake, 140 at Allerton Bywater, 78 at Potteric Carr, 68 at Scarborough Mere, 64 at Brandesburton Ponds, 58 at Hay–a–Park and at Beal Carrs, 47 at Thrybergh CP and 39 at Southfield Res. In February there were 101 at Skelton Lake, 128 at Allerton Bywater, 137 at Mickletown Ings. Notable March tallies included 185 at Lowther Lake, 140 at Mickletown Ings, 90 at Potteric Carr and 63 at Ripon RC. Skelton Lake hosted 135 in June.

During the summer successful breeding was reported from Adel Dam, Allerthorpe GP (two broods), Catcliffe Flash, Edderthorpe Flash (eight broods), Farnham GP (six broods), Filey Dams (three broods), Flasks Lake,

Gouthwaite Res, Hay–a–Park (one brood), John O' Gaunts, Kelk Lake (one brood), Lingham Lake, Margrove Ponds, North Cave, Nosterfield NR (five broods), Peasholm Park (three broods), Potteric Carr (six+ broods), Scaling Dam, Skelton Lake (two broods), Southfield Res (two broods), Staveley NR (two broods), Studley Lake (two broods), Swillington Ings (19 broods), Winterset Res (11 broods) and Wykeham Lakes(five broods). However, there were fewer breeding reports received compared to previous years, which may reflect on the wet weather experienced in June, July and August.

Maximum site counts during the second half of the year included: 63 at Scorton Quarry in July and 147 at Mickletown Ings and 107 at Harewood Park in August. September produced 121 at Bolton–on–Swale and 258 on Lowther Lake, while there were 435 on Edderthorpe Flash and 345 on Rother Valley CP in October. Scarborough Mere held 64 in November, but numbers improved across the county in the final month with: 101 at Allerton Bywater, 113 at Catwick GP, 62 at Southfield Res, 129 at Thrybergh CP and 100+ at Wheldrake Ings in December. However, again most appeared to be wintering along the Aire Valley, with up to 600 present through the last quarter.

SCAUP *Aythya marila* **A**

Red list and UK BAP species: uncommon coastal migrant and winter visitor; scarce inland

The birds wintering in Britain of this circumpolar species mostly come from Iceland and Scandinavia east to Siberia, usually favouring marine habitats, but are also occasional inland.

During the first half of the year, reports were received from 25 different sites. Several long–stayers were reported, including: one at Burton Riggs from 1st January to 28th March and joined briefly by a second on 17th February; a female at Castle Howard from 1st January to 22nd April; female sporadically at North Cave from 12th January to 10th April; a first–winter drake at Ulley CP from 4th January, where it was joined by a female on 10th and both remained until 9th February. The female reappeared at Ulley CP on 22nd February, where it remained until 12th April. Swillington Ings hosted up to three until 21st April and a drake resided at Welton Water from 13th January to 10th April. A female remained on the Borrow Pit at Spurn between 16th February and 7th March and a drake visited Ripon RC from 23rd–26th March.

Short–stayers included singles at Sprotbrough Flash on 1st January, Fairburn Ings and Beacon Ponds on 12th, on the Humber near Brough Haven on 13th, at Nosterfield NR on 20th and at Eccup Res on 21st January. In February a single visited Whitley Res on 8th/9th, the Humber near Brough Haven on 10th and at Kilnsea and Filey Dams on 24th. In March one was at Rother Valley CP on 9th, the female was seen again at Filey Dams on 13th and 29th, one was at Otley Wetlands on 14th and two were at Hornsea Mere on 25th. The sole April record was at Beacon Ponds on 21st. A single stayed at Locke Park, Redcar on 3rd/4th May, Paull attracted a female on 27th/28th May followed by a female was at Blacktoft Sands on 30th May, while Tophill Low hosted a drake on 8th June.

During the final half of the year, a single showed intermittently at Swillington Ings from 5th–20th July and one stayed at Scaling Dam from 12th–15th August. September records included a single at Filey Dams from 10th–14th, a female at Lingham Lake on 13th, two on the Humber off Spurn on 18th (with five at Spurn on 20th), two at Hornsea Mere and two at Rother Valley CP both on 29th; this latter site then held up to four until 18th October.

Singles were at Orgreave Lake on 2nd October, Winterset Res on 5th, Hornsea Mere on 9th, six were at Anglers CP on 13th and singles visited Southfield Res on 16th and Scaling Dam on 26th October. A single appeared on Flasks Lake on 29th November, while Hornsea Mere attracted a single on 8th December, four on 14th and another single on 19th December. Other December records included one at Smithies Pond (Barnsley) on 20th, while two were at Welton Waters on 23rd and up to three remained at Swillington Ings throughout the month.

Small numbers were recorded on coastal passage, with singles off Filey on 4th January, Flamborough on 27th February, Spurn on 16th March and a pair flew south past Spurn on 3rd May. After a gap one headed past Flamborough on 10th July. Singles were logged flying past Flamborough on 23rd September, but altogether more impressive were 53 flying past Flamborough on 28th September. Filey Brigg recorded a single on 2nd October, five headed past Flamborough on 23rd and singles flew past Flamborough and Hawsker Point on the final day of October. Passage at Spurn was restricted to 19 south and five north between 13th September and 3rd December.

A hybrid (most likely with Pochard) but resembling a female Scaup was at Farnham GP between September and December.

LESSER SCAUP *Aythya affinis* **A** 0,2,2,0,1
Vagrant: nine previous records
A Nearctic duck that winters down to northern South America; first recorded in the UK in 1987, but now heading for rare migrant status.
In the north of the county, Cleasby GP hosted a drake on 7th/8th May; found in the evening, it was still present late the following day (SCB: RCT *et al.*). This is the first since two in 2006, which included another drake on spring passage, at Farnham GP from 30th April–4th May.

EIDER *Somateria mollissima* **A**
Amber list: uncommon coastal migrant and visitor; rare inland
This marine species breeds at Coquet Island, Northumberland northwards, but some non–breeding birds summer on the coast, and others winter.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
South Tees	3	5	4	23	19	11	22	19	5	3	4	21

Small numbers were present off the coast for most of the year, including a group of ten off Filey, although 12 were present on 22nd March. Small numbers were regular off Flamborough with a best of 21 on 5th January. Scarce off Spurn during the first four months of the year, with a best of 17 on 2nd January. Elsewhere up to four were regular at Whitby, with five present on 13th January and six on 13th April. No more than two were present off Kettleness, Long Nab and Skinningrove through to March. Over the summer, a lone male resided in Filey Bay and four were off Ravenscar on 27th June; small numbers were present off Flamborough throughout, including 10 on 28th June. More unusual was a pair accompanied by eight ducklings in Cornelian Bay on 31st August; presumably having travelled down the coast from a breeding area further north.
Higher numbers were logged heading north along the coast at the end of October. On 30th 59 flew north at Spurn and ten went past Whitby on 30th; the following day witnessed 63 flying north at Spurn, 64 north at Flamborough, 145 headed north at Long Nab and 19 were logged at Hawsker Point. On 1st November 141 flew past Spurn, 47 headed past Filey and 135 were recorded passing Marine Drive. The movement continued on 2nd when 106 flew past Filey and 64 went north at Long Nab; another 103 flew past Spurn the following day and the last notable counts consisted of 91 flying past Spurn on 25th November and 222 passing Flamborough.

KING EIDER *Somateria spectabilis* **A** 0,0,0,0,1
Vagrant; two previous records
Circumpolar breeder on Arctic coasts, wintering south of breeding range; the nearest wintering grounds in Iceland and northern Scandinavia.

A much admired adult drake was discovered close inshore off North Landing, Flamborough at 1315hrs on 24th April; it remained until 30th April, having made a brief foray to the south side of the Headland (VR: JSh *et al.*). The only recent record relates to a drake that made a short visit to South Gare on 4th July 1998, while the other Yorkshire one refers to a single ‘caught’ off Bridlington in August 1846.

LONG–TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis* **A**
Scarce coastal migrant and winter visitor, rare inland
The nearest breeding locations of this circumpolar species are in Iceland and northern Norway; and birds thought to be of Scandinavian and Russian origin winter regularly in the southern North Sea in small numbers.
At the start of the year, singles were off South Gare and Flamborough on 5th, with another at the latter location on sporadic dates from 16th February through to 8th April. The only other in the first half of the year was a female off Marine Drive, Scarborough on 18th March.

Bran Sands hosted the first of the autumn on 14th September and there were no further records until October, when a single was off Flamborough on 30th. Northerly winds induced movement along the coast from the end of October and the 31st produced singles off South Gare, Marine Drive and Filey, two off Ness Point and three off Flamborough. In November a single flew past Filey on 1st and five more tracked north there on 2nd, when nine went north past Long Nab. Singles took up residency in Filey Bay from 1st–25th November and Scarborough harbour from 2nd–14th November. Additional November records included singles flying past Filey and South Gare on 23rd and Flamborough on 24th and 26th. Finally a single sheltered off Filey Brigg on 30th December.

One visited Hornsea Mere on 13th January, with up to two present there from 1st March until 20th April. A pond at Carlshead Farm, near Wetherby hosted another on 28th April, while a female was on fishing ponds at Weel, near Beverley from 4th–9th May. During the final half of the year, a single was at Hornsea Mere on 20th October, while further inland an immature stayed at Gouthwaite Res from 15th November until 25th December.

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra* **A**
Red list and UK BAP species: a fairly common coastal visitor, scarcer inland
Mostly winters offshore, with birds also seen moving to and from the North Norfolk coast, where nearly 5000 regularly winter.

Wintering numbers were relatively low, with the highest counts off Whitby where there were 180 on 2nd January, 97 still present on 17th February and 80 remaining on 13th April. A flock of 100 resided off Hundale Point, near Scarborough in January and further south a flock of 14 at Filey Brigg increased to 27 in early April. Few moved along the coast during the first few months, although 27 headed past Spurn on 30th January, with 28 passing Spurn on 10th February. A large raft of 454 took refuge on the Humber at Spurn during foggy weather on 27th March. A subsequent lull in records ended with 122 south off Filey on 28th June. In July 270 headed past Spurn on 2nd, 87 flew past Filey on 6th and 260 were logged passing Spurn on 22nd. Records showed another peak in mid August when 370 flew past Spurn on 16th and 145 went past Long Nab and 479 passed Spurn the following day. September brought counts of: 320 tracking past Spurn on 12th and 331 there the following day, when an additional 98 headed south off Filey, and 80 flew past Marine Drive, Scarborough on 23rd September. In the final three months 70 headed past Filey on 31st October, with 98 off Long Nab on 2nd, 231 flew past Spurn on 18th and finally, 96 were off Whitby on 30th November.

Escaping the vagaries of the coast, a single was on the Humber at Sunk Island on 2nd January. There were then no further inland records until a single at Pugney’s GP on 13th March. A small overland movement was evident at the end of March starting with two at Sunk Island on 27th and singles the next day at Chelker Res, Elsecar Res, Silsden Res and Wheldrake Ings. In May there were four drakes and eight females at Winterset Res on 11th, an adult male at Eccup Res on 13th and two were at Thrybergh CP on 29th. Two visited Old Moor on 3rd June, while additional records from the same month included 19 at Ringstone Res on 23rd and three at Southfield Res on 24th. A female visited Eccup Res on 12th July and later in the month singles dropped in at Hornsea Mere on 25th, at North Cave the following day and Anglers CP on 27th. In August a female was at Southfield Res on 9th, a drake was at Anglers CP on 10th and three drakes were at Ringstone Edge Res on 31st.

In September five visited Orgreave on 2nd, a drake was at Green Withens Res on 8th, but most activity focused on 13th when singles were at Gorple Res, Lingham Lake, Redmires Res and four appeared on Swinsty Res; Southfield Res hosted two on 25th September. Eccup Res logged both October records on 16th and 26th, while seven were on Swillington Ings on 5th November and another single followed there on 30th. In December seven were at Tophill Low NR on 7th December and the year ended with singles at North Cave, Skelton Lake and Swillington Ings on New Year’s Eve.

VELVET SCOTER *Melanitta fusca* **A**
Amber list: uncommon coastal migrant and winter visitor, rare inland
This Holarctic species breeds in northern Scandinavia and is a scarce winter visitor to the east coast. In common with other coastal passage birds, there may be some duplication in records.
In January two flew past Flamborough on New Year’s Day, one flew south past Marine Drive, Scarborough on 4th, three were off South Gare the next day, two lingered in Filey Bay from 20th–26th and two flew past Flamborough on 26th January. A duo tracked past Flamborough on 2nd February, but numbers peaked mid month when 20 flew past Flamborough on 15th, with another five the next day. Singles were noted heading past Flamborough on 8th March, Spurn on 16th and 20th and Flamborough on 29th. Three flew past Flamborough on 10th April, with two there the following day and six tracked past Filey on 13th. Spring’s last records were singles passing Spurn on 5th and 25th May.

July typically featured a few records, starting with singles south at Spurn on 4th, 5th and 9th, followed by records off Flamborough on 12th and Marine Drive on 19th. Sporadic records of up to two then featured at most coastal watchpoints until late September, with bests of five off Flamborough and two off Marine Drive on 23rd September. Higher counts in October included three past Flamborough on 2nd and 4th, eight passing Spurn on 29th, and four flying past Marine Drive on 31st. Strong northerlies at the start of November induced further movement with five passing Spurn and eight off Marine Drive on 1st, seven flying past Filey the next day, five passing Spurn on 3rd and six flying past Flamborough on 13th November.
A female flew west at Saltend accompanied by Goldeneye on 28th January (DMP). At the end of the year, an adult male at Gouthwaite Res on Christmas Day was unusual and only the sixth record for the Harrogate area (PJC).

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula* **A**
Amber list: fairly common migrant and winter visitor, a few over-summer
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 11500: GB threshold 249

The Humber Estuary is now the only nationally important wintering site within the region for a species that breeds from Scotland east to Siberia. Nationally, numbers have fallen since the mid-90’s, and Hornsea Mere’s peak was the lowest for some time and well below the five-year mean of 282 and the GB threshold figure.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Castle Howard	26	25	24	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	12
Fairburn Ings	10	91	81	48	4	–	1	1	2	3	23	42
Farnham GP	14	17	5	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	7	12
Gouthwaite Res	34	26	25	22	–	–	–	–	–	–	28	37
Hay-a-Park GP	15	17	16	11	–	–	–	–	–	4	7	14
Hornsea Mere	98	185	110	–	–	–	–	–	2	12	45	–
North Humber	558	118	150	21	1	–	1	–	–	6	93	109
Nosterfield NR	7	16	12	18	–	–	–	–	–	3	10	14
Old Moor	12	12	18	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	2	8
Pugney’s CP	14	10	14	5	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	3
Rother Valley CP	9	13	10	23	–	–	–	–	–	2	8	13
Scaling Dam	7	3	14	11	1	0	0	0	0	3	7	8
Southfield Res	8	7	10	2	0	0	0	0	0	8	14	10
South Tees	26	41	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	29	48
Swillington Ings	38	27	36	4	–	–	–	–	–	5	20	44
Tophill Low	84	74	94	62	–	–	–	–	–	1	36	41
Welton Waters	19	18	12	6	–	–	–	–	–	–	9	9
Wintersett Res	77	83	106	61	3	1	1	0	1	22	31	54

The number wintering continues to decline with most reports involving just small numbers. In addition to the numbers recorded in the table, other notable counts included 20 at Knotford Nook in January, up to 20 along the river Aire between Skipton and Cononley, and 12 at Ulley CP. On 28th January 106 flew west up the Humber past Saltend. In February, there were 16 at Welton Waters, in March there were 24 at Tophill Low NR, 16 at Otley Wetlands and 12 at Edderthorpe Flash.

Over the summer, a flightless female spent its second summer at Pulfin Bog.
In October 14 were present on Eccup Res on 17th. November records included 11 at Lindley Wood Res on 15th, 16 at Treeton Dyke on 30th and 14 at Southfield Res on 31st. In December counts included 16 at Knotford Nook, 15 at Scaling Dam, 14 at Gouthwaite Res and 12 drakes at Thrybergh CP.

Coastal passage was almost entirely confined to the autumn period, starting with two north past Long Nab on 11th September. Records were more regular from the third week of October, with two flying past Flamborough on 18th and 22 south past Spurn on 22nd October; Filey’s first of the autumn appeared on the latter date being chased over the Country Park by a Peregrine. Numbers peaked at the end of October/early November, with 30 sheltering in Filey Bay on 28th October. Eighteen tracked past Long Nab and 29 flew past Spurn on 2nd November, with 37 passing the latter location on 7th. The final notable count related to a flock of 24 in Filey Bay on 17th November. In total 37 flew past Flamborough and Spurn logged 136 south and 31 north during the autumn.

SMEW *Mergellus albellus* **A**
Amber list: scarce winter visitor
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 400: GB threshold 4
Counts in 2006/07 were 50% lower than the previous winter.

In the Scarborough area, a first-winter remained from the previous year at Wykeham Lakes but was last seen on 4th January; the same site attracted a redhead from 9th–16th March. A redhead took up residence at Castle Howard from 19th January and, although elusive at times, it was noted sporadically until 11th April.

Up to five, including three males, were present at Tophill Low NR and presumably dispersing birds from this group were responsible for records from Watton NR and Pulfin Bog during the early months; Tophill’s last related to a single on 9th March. Other records from the east of the county included a drake at North Cave on 13th January and two visited Hornsea Mere on 11th February. Along the Humber a drake remained in the vicinity of Welton Water from 27th January to 9th March.

In West Yorkshire a drake took up residence at Fairburn Ings from 9th January to 5th March, while another drake toured Pugney’s GP and Wintersett Res from 22nd January through to 3rd April. In the north of the county a single visited Pepper Arden, several miles east of Bolton-on-Swale, on 30th March.

A redhead south off Marine Drive, Scarborough on 1st November represented the autumn’s first. A single redhead appeared at Watton NR on 4th November and three were in residence around the Tophill Low area by the year end.



RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator* **A**
Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor
Nationally has declined since the mid-1990s.

Monthly Maxima	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
South Tees	20	10	20	9	0	0	0	2	0	14	18	9
Scarborough	2	1	2	1	0	0	1	–	–	–	–	1
Flamborough	0	2	1	1	2	0	0	2	4	5	1	0
Spurn	1	0	3	2	–	–	–	–	–	10	5	0

Offshore the year began with singles passing Spurn on 1st /2nd January. A single lingered in the Scalby Mills/Jackson’s Bay area of Scarborough from 4th January to 3rd February, while a pair was in Filey Bay on 4th January, with a single remaining until 27th; the same day that one appeared off Sandsend. Elsewhere two were off Flamborough on 15th February and single fly-bys were occasional off Filey during both February and March; a single headed north past Spurn on 24th March. April witnessed an upsurge, with singles off Scalby Mills on 10th and Spurn on 12th. Three flew north at Spurn on 19th, when one flew past Flamborough, and two headed south at Spurn on 23rd and a single appeared on the Humber at Spurn on 27th April. A single flew past Flamborough on 12th May, followed by two passing the headland on 25th.

Away from the coast, Seamer Road Mere, Scarborough hosted a single from 6th–24th January. In March a drake visited Southfield Res on 19th, a female was at Seamer Road Mere on 26th, four dropped in at Old Moor on 28th. Finally two were at North Duffield Carrs on 4th May.

July’s sole coastal record related to one north off Marine Drive on 19th, followed by two off Flamborough on 8th August. Coastal passage intensified from late September when four flew past Flamborough on 23rd and continued until early November, with several records of up to four. However, ten tracked past Spurn on 8th and five flew past Flamborough on 21st and Filey on 30th. In November, five flew past Spurn on 8th and 15th and finally a drake took up residence around Scarborough harbour from 30th November to 14th December.

There were more inland records during the second half of the year beginning with an immature drake at Southfield Res on 1st July and two at Nosterfield NR on 10th August. Two visited Blacktoft Sands on 12th September, Flasks Lake hosted a single on 24th September and a female took up residence in the Cortonwood/Old Moor area from 10th October (to 26th November) and another appeared at Lingham Lake on 16th October. In November singles were at Eccup Res on 10th, at Preston Park on 16th, one accompanied Goosanders at Southfield Res on sporadic dates from 17th November–9th December, another joined the long–stayer at Old Moor on 23rd/24th November and a single was at Welton Waters on 28th November. In the final month, a single visited Elsecar Res on 3rd, another appeared at Skelton Lake on 6th, a single graced Edderthorpe Flash on 22nd and one roosted with Goosanders at Swillington Ings on 30th/31st.

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser* **A**
Uncommon to scarce breeder; uncommon migrant and winter visitor. BBS 6/204
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 2700: GB threshold 161

Breeds on fast–flowing rivers mostly in the west of the county, with numbers swollen in winter. Since colonizing the UK in 1871, males still fly to Tana Fjord, North Norway to moult during September, and this may account for some coastal sightings. Colonisation of England is continuing, and the regional population probably increasing, although winter numbers have decreased since mid 1990s.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Beal Carrs	6	21	15	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	7
Castle Howard	19	15	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	2	6
Catcliffe Flash	11	19	16	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	4	4
Eccup Res	37	42	15	–	–	–	–	–	43	47	53	43
Elland GP	7	9	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Fairburn Ings	–	12	8	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	14	11
Hay–a–Park	10	10	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	15	8
Long Preston	5	5	2	2	2	–	7	6	–	–	1	3
Old Moor	32	27	52	9	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	63
Rodley NR	20	7	8	4	5	7	7	4	5	2	6	29
Rother Valley CP	10	35	52	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	5	22
Skipton SW	3	3	5	10	10	18	6	4	3	6	8	3
Winterset Res	36	35	20	4	1	0	1	0	2	9	36	44
Yeadon Tarn	6	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	47	61	–

In addition to those tabulated, maximum January counts included up to 28 at Bretton Lakes, 25 at Swillington Ings, 15 at Denaby Ings, 13 at Sproatley and 11 on the Fitzwilliam Canal at Rotherham. In February there were up to 22 at Bretton Lakes, 18 on a fishing pond at Elvington, 12 at Dewsbury SW (on 28th) and 11 at Whitley Res (on 9th). East Park in Hull hosted 14 during March.

Over the summer, successful breeding was reported from several rivers in the west of the county. Broods were seen on the river Wharfe at Keswick Fitts, Knotford Nook, Otley, at Pool Paper Mills and at Tadcaster. On the river Aire, there were at least four broods in the Cononley area and a brood was noted beside Rodley NR. A brood of six was on the river Ure at Hawes in July, while two broods (each with six young) were on the Tees at Croft.

Some of the higher counts during the final half of the year included: 48 at Cortonwood Lake on 25th November, 15 at East Park Lake, Hull on 29th and 19 at Treeton Dyke on 30th November. December brought up to 46 at Swillington Ings, 35 at Harthill Res, 25 at Southfield Res, 21 at Hunslet, 20 at Bretton CP, 19 Kirkleatham Res, 14 at Skelton Castle and 11 on the river Ouse at Clifton Ings, York.

RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis* **C**
Scarce feral breeder since 1980; uncommon visitor from 1968. BBS 0/204

Due to control measures, a 45% national fall reduced numbers over the 2006/07 winter to those of the late 1980s, and this decrease was also evident in the county.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Blacktoft Sands	–	–	2	4	5	9	3	–	–	–	–	–
Castle Howard	–	–	–	–	2	2	–	1	–	–	–	–
Edderthorpe Flash	3	2	–	14	6	3	6	4	8	9	1	2
Fairburn Ings	–	2	2	8	6	9	8	6	–	22	13	3
Flasks Lake	–	–	2	1	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–
Gouthwaite Res	–	–	–	1	3	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
Hay–a–Park GP	8	11	8	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	1
Hornsea Mere	24	39	20	13	3	–	2	3	6	6	37	59
North Humber	14	19	24	31	24	–	9	3	5	–	7	13
Nosterfield NR	0	1	4	3	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Old Moor	7	23	20	22	21	24	–	22	21	10	4	4
Rodley NR	0	0	0	5	5	5	1	0	1	0	0	0
Smallways	–	–	2	2	–	–	–	–	4	5	–	–
Southfield Res	0	0	2	3	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	1
South Tees	0	0	0	3	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Staveley NR	–	–	–	2	1	2	3	–	–	–	–	–
Swillington Ings	64	26	47	10	12	4	10	9	70	71	30	25
Tophill Low	53	–	–	–	7	5	3	16	26	7	3	38
Winterset Res	39	19	21	6	3	1	1	5	19	60	27	33

The DEFRA cull continued this year with a number of sites again reporting shooting parties. The cull is having a noticeable effect, with many sites reporting lower numbers than previous years.

Away from the main waters listed in the table, records were received from a scattering of sites, although some areas withheld data. In January one was at Yeadon Tarn on New Year’s Day, followed by a single at Pugney’s CP on 24th, two there on 27th, and a pair visited Southfield Res on 28th. In February two were at Broomhill Flash on 18th, one was at Saltmarshe Delph on 26th and four returned to Filey Dams on 29th. Two appeared at Smallways on 14th, followed by a duo at North Cave on 17th March and six were at Pepper Arden on 30th. April witnessed an increase with singles at Rodley NR on 3rd, at Flasks Lake on 5th, Staveley NR on 10th, Castle Howard on 11th, Silverwood Tip on 14th and Welton Waters on 18th. In addition pairs were at Eccup Res on 6th and Pulfin Bog on 29th.

Over the summer breeding was confirmed from just four sites: there were two broods at Potteric Carr, one brood at Swillington Ings and at two sites near Sheffield.

During the final half of the year six gathered at Potteric Carr on 13th July, four were at Harewood Park on 17th August and six at Allerton Bywater on 24th and a single was at Eccup Res on 30th August. September records included females at Rodley NR on 4th and Pulfin Bog on 13th, a single at Eccup Res on 20th and three at Pepper Arden on 28th September. A single dropped in at Farnley Res on 19th October, Welton Waters held three on 28th November and singles were at Eccup Res on 10th and Yeadon Tarn on 26th December.

RED GROUSE *Lagopus lagopus scotica* **A**
Amber list and UK BAP species: fairly common resident breeder of upland moors. BBS 41/204

Yorkshire is an English stronghold of this subspecies of the European Willow Ptarmigan. It breeds exclusively on heather moorland, where the population is managed. A long–term population decline due to loss of heather moorland, viral disease and predation from corvids and foxes has prompted the move of this species to the Amber list.

There were widespread records of low double figure counts where suitable areas of heather are present, with the only notable counts of 95 on Barden Moor in January, 105 on Barden Fell and 140 from Barden Moor in November.

Long-term monitoring work undertaken by the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (2010) across northern England showed that high spring densities, followed by a good breeding season, resulted in one of the best ever grouse shooting seasons in the Yorkshire Dales, with a number of estates shooting record bags.
Ref: Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust. 2010. Red Grouse Counts in 2008.
<http://www.gct.org.uk/research__surveys/species_research/birds/red_grouse_bap_species/1519.asp>

BLACK GROUSE *Tetrao tetrix* **A**
Red list and UK BAP species: rare to scarce resident breeder. BBS 2/204

This species continues to increase in the Yorkshire Dales Upland Bird Study Area and has benefited from habitat improvements.

A total of 164 lekking males was recorded in North Yorkshire during the spring, with the majority coming from the core breeding areas in Arkengarthdale, Upper Wensleydale and Swaledale in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Outside the breeding season, there were regular low double figure counts at a number of sites in the former two areas. A single lekking male in Ribblesdale and a female with at least four fledged young in late summer were the first in that area for a number of years; an encouraging, albeit tentative, sign of further range expansion into formerly occupied sites within the Dales.

In the south of the county birds released as part of the Peak District re-introduction scheme accounted for low single figure counts from a number of areas, with at least nine lekking males reported in spring and a maximum of 20 males at an undisclosed site on 18th May. There were no records in the summer months, but following a report of three at Moscar on 21st September, there were regular records of up to four birds from five sites through to the end of the year.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa* **C**
Common resident. BBS 61/204: +47% (+27) 1994-2008, +18% (+5) 2007-08
Based on BBS data, numbers seem to be increasing in most areas of the county, although to what extent the population is dependent on releases for shooting is not clear, the numbers of which have more than doubled since 1990.

There were numerous records from across the county, but any attempt to determine a population status or trend is impossible due to the huge numbers of birds released for shooting. There were widespread breeding records but none relating to more than just a few breeding pairs, and it is not clear whether the population is self-sustaining in many areas. Large numbers continue to be released in many upland areas such as the Yorkshire Dales, where this species was formerly absent.



Quail ●
Ray Scally

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix* **AC**
Red list and UK BAP species: fairly common resident. BBS 29/204

The national picture is one of rapid decline, probably due to agricultural intensification, but also overshooting in areas where Red-legged Partridges released. Noted in significantly fewer BBS squares this year in the county, although this is insufficient evidence to determine population changes, particularly from the arable strongholds in East and North Yorkshire, where releases can temporarily boost the population.

Most reports paint a bleak picture. Described as very scarce near North Cave Wetlands and declining in the Barnsley area, with 20 breeding pairs recorded. It was also a disappointing year in the Sheffield area, with only three double figure counts and proven breeding at only five sites. In the Leeds area there were only eleven reports away from Swillington Ings with no breeding records at all, perhaps as a result of a lack of recorder effort, with a maximum covey of 16 at Skelton Lake in January. There were between eight and 12 at Fairburn throughout the year, with one pair breeding on the reserve and a maximum count of 15 on 22nd December. There were very few records from Wharfedale, with reports of the species being in serious decline. In contrast, there were more widespread records in the Bradford area during the year; the population was reported as doing well around Scarborough and stable at Flamborough where there were peak counts of 18 in February and 16 in October. A bird at Scaling Dam on 7th June was an interesting local record. In the Humberhead Levels there were notable counts of 65 in eight coveys on Thorne Moors in October and over 40 at Southfield Res on 7th and 18th December.

QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix* **A**
Amber list: scarce summer breeding visitor and passage migrant

It was a good year by recent standards starting with calling males at Bolton Ings on 15th May, North Duffield Carrs from 18th-24th, Little Hutton on 18th, Armthorpe on 23rd and three at Foston on 24th. On 27th May one flushed from the Point at Spurn constituted the year's only record there. Two were calling at Bank Island on 30th May, with singles on the same day at Brandesburton and at Great Ouseburn; the latter calling until 27th June.

Further records in June included singles at: Leven Carrs on 1st, North Anston from 1st-7th, at Wheldrake on 3rd/4th, and at Ravenscar, Sheffield City airport, Stoupe Brow, Scarborough and three at Tophill Low all on 4th. There were also records from Wholestone Moor, Huddersfield on 6th, one seen at Sammy's Point on 9th, Helperthorpe from 10th June (to 27th July), Barden on 12th, at Honley, Huddersfield on 20th and two calling at Wheldrake on 24th. There were two near Hole of Horcum and one at Grinkle on 25th June, with singles at Grimston on 27th and Atwick on 28th; the former regularly heard until 4th August. There was also a calling bird near Upsall on 29th June.

Additional calling birds in July included singles at Ulley CP on 2nd; Paull Holme Strays, Pulfin High Eske and two at Tophill Low on 14th, at Emmotland on 23rd, North Cave Wetlands on 26th, Beswick on 29th and at least one at Hatfield Moors on 30th. In August birds were reported from High Eske Farm on 1st, two at Kelk on 5th, Goxhill on 15th, Watton Carrs on 16th, Grimston on 17th/18th and Atwick again on 22nd.

PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus* **C**
Common to abundant resident
BBS 161/204: +78% (+36) 1994-2008, +12% (-9) 2007-08

This is one of the most widespread species, with particularly large populations in North Yorkshire, where many are released for shooting. The trend from BBS data shows a rapid increase, doubling in numbers since 1994, and this species is just outside the top 15 most common birds in the county.

Like Red-legged Partridge, the large numbers released across the county make any attempt to estimate a population total irrelevant. There were records of small numbers of breeding birds from many areas. The only notable count related to a loose flock of 517 in two ploughed fields at Wilton on 8th March that had successfully evaded the gun during the preceding shooting season.

RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata* **A**
Amber list: fairly common coastal migrant and winter visitor; rare inland
WeBS Status - Int. threshold 300: GB threshold 170

This circumpolar species breeds in decreasing numbers in Europe, in northern Scandinavia and north-west Scotland, and many winter in the southern North Sea.

The highest counts from the northern section of coast came from Skinningrove, which recorded up to 35 from 22nd-24th October. There were records from every month from Scarborough, although double-figure counts were only reached in September, with a high of 32 passing Long Nab on 12th. A similar pattern at Filey, with 23 south on 13th January the best in the first half of the year. Numbers again peaked during the autumn,

with 77 south on 27th September followed by 40 south on 31st October. Seventeen wintered in Filey Bay at the end of the year.

In line with other locations, Flamborough experienced a disappointing year, with early peaks of 76 on 8th January, 102 on 10th February and 50 on 29th March. Thereafter, single figures were the norm until September, with 72 on 28th. The final quarter was again relatively quiet, with a best of 79 on 26th November. Spurn logged 57 on 2nd and 106 on 25th February. However, the highest counts came in the latter half of the year: 102 on 28th September; 88 on 2nd October; 96 on 20th and 170 on 22nd December.

Inland, a single was picked up freshly dead at Castle Howard Lake on 5th January and another stayed on Hornsea Mere from 13th January to mid-February (AFJ et al.). Adjacent to the Humber, one sought sanctuary on Welton Waters on 26th/27th January (EJH et al.). A single grounded near Embsay on 21st March was released on the nearby reservoir, where it remained until 6th April. In the latter half, a summer-plumaged adult appeared at Rother Valley CP on 2nd November (KRG: RG et al.). Finally, a winter-plumaged adult was on the Park Lake, Wintersetts from 26th December until the year-end (PS et al.).

BLACK-THROATED DIVER *Gavia arctica* **A**

Amber list and UK BAP species: scarce coastal passage migrant and winter visitor; rare inland

Small numbers breed in Scotland, but most of Yorkshire’s records are of birds from Scandinavia and northern Russia. Like the previous species, its UK population is increasing in contrast to a decline elsewhere in Europe, with a 34% increase in Scotland in the 12 years to 2006; this increase has largely been attributed to the placement of artificial breeding islands on Scottish lochs.

Saltburn recorded a single on 13th March, followed by up to three off Skinningrove between 22nd October and 1st November. Two fed off Long Nab on 15th February, with a single south off Marine Drive on 23rd September and another there the next day. Two flew north at Long Nab on 29th October and Scarborough’s last headed north past Marine Drive on 31st October. Filey recorded singles on 11th, 19th, 26th and 31st October. A significant decline at Flamborough with 18 bird/days and records confined to January/February and October/November: two on 1st and 28th January constituted the best on any single day. A single sheltered off Barmston on 31st October. There were just two records at Spurn: an adult in breeding plumage flew south on 24th September and another headed south on 27th October; one flew north at Grimston on 1st November.

The only inland record referred to one at Burton Riggs, near Scarborough from 6th January to 17th February (NWA: DMP: GW: SW *et al.*).

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer* **A**

Amber list: scarce coastal passage migrant and winter visitor; rare inland

A regular winter visitor from Iceland and Greenland, the nearest breeding grounds of this essentially Nearctic species.

A single lingered off South Gare from 13th–18th January, with the same site hosting another on 23rd August, while just to the south, a lone bird rested on the sea between Marske and Redcar on 15th November. The Scarborough coastline produced one north off Marine Drive on 4th January, with another in Jackson’s Bay on 19th January. In autumn one flew south at Long Nab on 2nd October, one headed north off Jackson’s Bay on 15th October, with three south off Long Nab on 28th October. Another flew south off Marine Drive on 1st November, followed by one that took up temporary residence around the harbour from 3rd–23rd November. Scarborough’s last sheltered in South Bay on 12th December.

A single overwintered at Filey from the start of the year and was last seen on 18th March. There was then a gap until singles headed: south on 22nd September, north on 5th October, with perhaps the same south the following day; finally, another south on 18th October. Filey Bay again attracted a wintering individual, present from 1st November through until the year end; it was joined by a second bird on 22nd/23rd November. Flamborough logged 61 bird/days, with most activity confined to the late autumn period, with five on 13th November, followed by six the following day. A single flew south past Barmston on 6th December. Spurn’s first headed south on 2nd January and another flew north on 30th January. One was on the sea on 1st February, then a gap till a single north on 17th May. Autumn witnessed one north past the Spurn seawatching hut on 29th October. In November, singles flew south on 10th and 17th, one tracked north on 18th, two flew north on 23rd and one headed north on 28th. December witnessed singles north on 3rd and south on 11th, and finally one rested on the sea off Spurn on 14th.

Remaining from the previous year, Tophill Low hosted a first-winter until 5th January. In the second winter period, another first-winter sheltered on Welton Waters from 13th November through to the year-end and was joined by a second bird from 21st–29th December (GED *et al.*).

WHITE-BILLED DIVER *Gavia adamsii* **A**

0,0,0,1,1

Rare winter visitor: 27 previous records

Breeds from western Siberia east to Canada, wintering coastally, with small numbers reaching northwest Europe.

A breeding plumaged adult flew south past Long Nab just 250 metres offshore at 1110hrs on 29th October (NWA). Only Scarborough’s seventh ever record, it came almost exactly a year since a moulting adult headed past Flamborough in early November.

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis* **A**

Amber list: uncommon resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS 1/204

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 4000: GB threshold 78

Breeds on small, shallow fresh waters, and easily overlooked unless riverine surveys are conducted.

There were fewer records from the eastern fringe, although two pairs bred at Margrove Ponds, one pair bred at ICI Wilton Lake, while pairs raised young at both Lovell Hill and Skelton Castle. The only confirmed nesting near Scarborough came at Wykeham Lakes, where a pair was observed with chicks in July. At least two pairs bred at Filey Dams and four pairs attempted to breed at Spurn, although none were successful.

Potteric’s breeding population continues to expand, as the Huxter Well extension vegetates over; at least 18 pairs nested and 33 young hatched from the 12 pairs on Huxter. Five pairs bred at Fairburn; considerably fewer than the 15 in 2006, although that was considered an exceptional total. The Old Moor area proved to be a particular stronghold with 23 young reared from seven broods on Broomhill Flash; 29 young from 13 broods on Old Moor; 13 young from five broods on Bolton Ings and seven more young from three broods on smaller ponds.

Beacon Ponds held 26 on 29th December, while numbers on Bransholme Lake peaked at 25 on 18th September. North Cave hosted 36 during October, while Blacktoft Sands’ best related to 20 on 7th April. Further west, 40 were logged at Potteric Carr in September. Numbers in the Skelton Lake to Lowther Lake area of the Lower Aire Valley included 47 on 20th July, 54 on 14th September and 43 on 19th October. Elsewhere post-breeding records included an Old Moor maximum of 80 from 21st August to 1st September, 30 at Edderthorpe Flash on 18th September and 32 at Nosterfield NR during September.

Unusually singles were on the sea off the Warren at Spurn on 5th April and again on 1st November.

Site & Date												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Blacktoft Sands	2	4	10	20	16	17	n/c	11	2	n/c	2	0
North Cave	10	10	15	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	36	12	3

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus* **A**

Uncommon to scarce resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS 3/204.

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 3600: GB threshold 159

A widespread species in Europe found on larger lowland lakes, reservoirs, meres and gravel pits. The breeding and wintering population is probably increasing; small numbers winter on the coast.

Filey Bay held up to 16 in January, although numbers were much lower at the end of the year, when no more than five could be located. Most winter south of Flamborough along the Holderness coast: 42 were visible at the north end of Bridlington Bay on 12th February; 49 were off Ulrome on 31st October and 30 were off Barmston on 6th December. Significant counts from inland waters included: 32 at Pugney’s GP on 15th January; 20 at Farnham GP during February; 28 at Wentworth Park on 18th April; 21 at Lingham Lake in July; 24 at Old Moor on 29th August; 24 at Skelton Lake on 19th October; 36 at Fairburn during October; 48 at Southfield Res from 26th–31st October; 71 at Wintersetts Res on 7th December; and 30 at Thrybergh CP on 9th/12th December.

Single pairs bred at both Wykeham Lakes and Seamer Road Mere, each raising two young. Breeding success was especially poor in the inland reaches of the county, which were affected by severe late June weather. Nine pairs attempted to breed at Fairburn Ings, but all the nests were swept away. A poor breeding season in the Leeds area, with only twelve pairs found at nine waters and few young fledged. Pairs bred at an additional nine waters in the Barnsley recording area. This included nine pairs at Wintersetts Res, although only two young fledged, making it the poorest such year since 2001; five pairs at Worsbrough Res fledged just two young. Around the Sheffield area five broods were raised at Wentworth Park and breeding was confirmed from a further six sites.

In the Harrogate area breeding records came from: Farnham GP (two pairs); Flasks Lake (one pair); Glasshouses Dam (one pair, one chick of three survived); Gouthwaite Res; Hay-a-Park GP (two pairs); John O’Gaunts Res (one pair); Lingham Lake (one pair); Nicholson’s Lagoon (one pair); Nosterfield NR (two or three pairs); Staveley NR (one pair).

Site & Date												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Old Moor	19	16	18	21	16	22	18	24	21	8	11	8
Pugney's CP	32	19	18	8	n/c	9	7	11	7	15	15	19
Southfield Res	7	7	9	14	26	22	26	30	35	48	38	24
Winterset	19	9	16	10	13	17	30	52	41	38	47	71

RED-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps grisegena* **A** 24,57,30,32,18
Amber list: scarce migrant and winter visitor
Breeds sporadically on fresh water in Western Europe, much commoner from Eastern Europe eastwards. Disperses westwards to salt or tidal waters, and is more common in the county when hard weather pushes continental winterers further west.

Records continue to decline, with Scarborough's first flying north past Long Nab on 29th October. More co-operative, one showed well around the harbour from 29th November to 11th December, with another in Scarborough's North Bay on 27th December. Filey Bay attracted a single on 21st February, followed by a juvenile there on 11th/12th September and another flew south past the Brigg on 14th September. Flamborough's second worst ever showing began promisingly with a single on New Year's Day. However, the next record came on 16th August; matters improved in September with lone individuals on 13th/14th and 24th. Flamborough's final records came on 1st and 15th November. A single was off Ulrome on 22nd August with another off Barmston on 31st October. Only two recorded at Spurn, with the first flying north on an unseasonal 22nd July and the next was logged on the sea on 30th August.

Inland, the single returning adult endured another lonely vigil on Hatfield Moors during the summer and was present from 5th April; Ulley CP hosted a single from 2nd-10th November (DMB *et al.*), an immature was on the Conservation Lake at Otley on 25th/26th November (DB: LR *et al.*) and another immature was at Sprotbrough Flash from 26th November-2nd December (CGJ: HP *et al.*).



Slavonian Grebe ●
Richard Tite

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus* **A** 13,7,23,19,11
Amber list: scarce migrant and winter visitor, more frequent in autumn
A small population of the larger-billed form breeds in Scotland, but it is the smaller-billed eastern population, breeding from Sweden eastwards, which winters in the county.

A single was off Spurn on 28th October (SGw). Filey Bay consistently proves to be the best coastal location and a single that sheltered there from 25th-30th November was joined by a second on the latter date (SC: J&TGD *et al.*). Two were on the sea off Atwick on 2nd November (EJH: JPH: RL).

An immature remained at Hornsea Mere from 1st October until 3rd December, but it often went missing for several days; it was joined by a second individual on several dates from 16th October (EJH *et al.*). Tophill Low

also hosted an immature from 5th October through to 1st November (JB *et al.*), while one in winter plumage visited nearby Pulfin Bog on 13th October (DGH).

A single appeared at Swillington Ings on 29th November, with presumably the same again on 5th December (JMS: ARo: REL). A single visited Winterset on 12th/13th January (PS: GJS: PW *et al.*), with presumably the same at Pugney's CP on 14th January (NN: SP).

BLACK-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis* **A**
Amber list: rare breeder, scarce winter visitor and passage migrant
Breeds sporadically in the county, with a distribution, stretching from Spain eastwards.

A single remained at Scaling Dam from 24th August to 12th September. Hornsea Mere attracted one on 21st-23rd March, followed by another on 16th April. In autumn a single lingered from 31st August through to 14th September, with two present from 18th-25th September and one from 2nd-14th October. After a single at Tophill Low on 12th April, up to four were present in spring and two present from 31st July through to 27th September. Up to two lingered on Hornsea Mere from 18th September until 21st October. North Cave hosted a pair in breeding plumage on 25th April.

In the Lower Derwent, a pair at Bank Island from 16th-19th April represented the latest spring arrival since 1992, while two pairs were present at North Duffield Carrs from 18th-22nd April. Low water levels precluded any chance of attempted breeding. Nearby, a single arrived at Skipwith Common on 16th April and remained to 21st.

A summer-plumaged adult appeared on Southfield Res on 31st March. On Thorne Moors, the first arrived on 6th May, with up to five present before the month end. A pair was then present on Thorne on 17th June, followed by a single on 27th. Three appeared at a site in South Yorkshire on 29th March, increasing to five on 5th April and 11 were present from 11th-29th April; seven remained on 28th May with five, including an immature, present on 30th July. Three were still present on 18th August.

Ever present at Potteric from April-August and two pairs bred for the first time. The first pair arrived on 29th April and hatched two young in late June; both juveniles were independent by mid-August, the last leaving the site on 2nd September. The second pair hatched one chick, but unfortunately, it soon disappeared. In addition, a pair bred at a site in West Yorkshire, successfully fledging two young.

Two were on Old Moor on 10th May and thought to be the same were two present on 23rd May. Three were on Winterset on 28th May. Thrybergh attracted singles on 13th April, 4th August and 2nd October, while the lagoon at Silverwood Colliery hosted up to three between 18th-24th April and a single from 12th-16th September. One appeared at Harthill Res on 1st October.

A pair was seen on 24th/25th April on Main Bay, Fairburn. A single remained around New Flash during the first two weeks of August and again at the end of the month on Fairburn's Main Bay. Nearby, Swillington Ings attracted singles on 10th May, 23rd and 29th August.

Two in full breeding plumage were at Flasks Lake on 11th May.

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis* **A**
Amber list: fairly common breeder; common offshore; occasional inland. BBS o/2o4

In the north there were 100 pairs between Saltburn and Skinningrove and 105 pairs between Hummersea and Cowbar, down on a combined total of 280 pairs in 2007. None were located at the former nesting site of Roseberry Topping, with two birds nearby on 13th March the area's sole record. Around Scarborough, breeding records included 13 pairs on the Castle Cliffs and two pairs on the Grand Hotel. A full census of the Bempton/Flamborough colony located 878 pairs, down on the 1252 pairs present in 2000 and 900 pairs present in 1987.

Numbers passing the coastal watch-points also seem to be decreasing. Flamborough logged only 18,047 bird/days, concentrated over the first six months, with 2419 in January, 2931 in March and 1513 in June. Numbers were much lower in October, although 83 were recorded on 3rd, with 295 the daily maximum over the last two months.

Strong northerlies at Filey on 2nd January pushed 628 south in one hour, with 200 north in a similar timeframe off Marine Drive on 22nd March. Spurn's maximum count related to 347 north on 25th May. In the autumn, 420 tracked north off Marine Drive on 22nd September.

Inland a single flew over the M1 by Skelton Lake on 4th November.

January again proved to be a good month for 'Blue Fulmar' records: recorded on five dates at Filey, with a best of six on 2nd and 12 bird/days at Flamborough, with a maximum of six on 5th January. Filey logged singles in February, March and April, although most activity focussed on the latter half of May. Eight flew past Spurn on 25th May and five headed past Flamborough the following day. The latter half of the year was much quieter, although there were five bird/days at Flamborough from 12th-20th July. Scarborough's sole record flew north off Long Nab on 21st July and a single was off Cowbar on 6th September.

Along the northern section of coastline, 16 pairs were at Hunt Cliff and a further 35 pairs were counted at Boulby; the Filey colony was not monitored. Post breeding aggregations again featured on Filey Brigg, with 45 present during July.

Southerly movement was noted along the coast from late summer, with 107 logged south at Long Nab between 3rd August and 29th October, including 42 south on 9th September. At Spurn 164 flew south between 23rd July and 8th November, including 14 on 1st September, 24 on 10th September and 15 on 3rd November. However, passage was best illustrated at Flamborough, where the maximum count by the end of July was a mere 34. Numbers heading south increased during August and peaked at 129 south on 25th, followed by another 103 south on 6th September. Counts declined after 63 flew south on 2nd October, with a December high of just 12.

Present throughout the year in the Lower Derwent Valley, where the breeding colony at Wheldrake Ings continues to prosper with around 25 nests. Although present during the summer at Castle Howard Lake, breeding was not confirmed; 33 were present on 27th October. The Fairburn Ings colony held 313 individuals on 18th May and 100 breeding pairs established; this represented an increase from 80 pairs in 2007.

In addition to the counts illustrated in the table, the Lower Aire Valley held up to 40 birds on several dates, with a maximum of 53 on 10th February. Roosting numbers at Lindley Wood were disappointing, peaking at 28 in July and down on 41 in January 2007 and 54 in March 2006. Numbers built up at Thrybergh CP in December, with a best of 48 on 9th December.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* A

Amber list: scarce coastal breeder; uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor

Breeds on rocky coasts of the northeast Atlantic and Mediterranean, including northeast Yorkshire, with usually only local post-breeding dispersal.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
South Tees	1	2	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	23	10	0

A census of the Bempton/Flamborough cliffs revealed a worrying decline, with just 24 pairs located. This compares with 30 pairs in 2000 and 60 pairs in 1987.

With the exception of Flamborough, most coastal waters recorded lower than average numbers. No single site attracted more than four around Scarborough in either winter period. Further south, Filey Bay hosted 37 on 20th January, although the usual count was less than 20. Flamborough's January maximum was 178, with 97 the top tally during February. Spring movement was hard to detect, although 42 tracked past Filey Brigg on 4th April. The highest numbers were recorded at Flamborough during autumn, with 253 on 27th September and 334 on 4th, 274 on 5th and 255 on 11th October. Relatively scarce at Spurn, where the year's first was not recorded before 23rd March; regular between September and November, with highs of eight on 10th September and 16 off Spurn on 24th November.

A single took up residence on the Sailing Pit at Welton Waters from New Year's Day through to 10th March, with two present from 18th January to 2nd February. An adult in breeding plumage visited Elland GP from 3rd–6th May. Finally, an immature was present at Meadowgate Lake NR, then Rother Valley CP on 24th/25th August.

BITTERN *Botaurus stellaris* A

Red list and UK BAP species: rare breeding species and scarce migrant and winter visitor

The small British breeding population continues to slowly recover following extensive management work on reedbeds across the country. Yorkshire's small breeding population is augmented by continental immigrants in winter.

Coatham Marsh hosted one from 3rd–12th January, with singles again on 5th October and 4th December. Further south, one remained at Tophill Low from New Year's Day through to 27th January, with another present there on 24th July. Hornsea Mere hosted a single on 18th February.

Blacktoft Sands held a single booming male and two active nests were subsequently located. Both females fed the young for over 60 days, after a first hatching date around 18th – 21st May; the juveniles fledged from 19th – 21st July. It is thought that both females managed to successfully raise at least two young and these constitute the first case of proved fledging at Blacktoft. The females fed up to 3km from the nest, often feeding on sticklebacks, but also took Coot/Moorhen chicks. Another site along the Humber attracted a booming male and at least one young almost certainly fledged at this site. Interestingly, the nest was located in a tidal reedbed, possibly the first time this has ever been recorded in the UK.

Five wintered at Potteric Carr in January, down one compared to 2007. One was still present around Piper Marsh in early April, with the next confirmed sighting at Willow Marsh on 1st June. For the first time in over a century, one summered at Potteric and a second arrived back on 15th August. Three appeared to be overwintering at the year-end. Singles visited the Lower Derwent Valley on 23rd September and 9th October.

Fairburn Ings provided two records: one on New Flash on 23rd February and a single at Phalarope Pool on 13th March. Nearby one remained in residence at Swillington Ings from the start of the year until 23rd January. Further sightings occurred there on 19th April, 14th June and sporadically from 27th October to the year end.

In the Sheffield area, one remained at Pit-house from 21st–30th November. One overwintering at Old Moor was seen up to 17th January and it or another was noted again on 10th March. Nearby, the reedbeds at Carlton Marsh sheltered one from 21st February to 7th March. A single returned to Old Moor on 30th November and remained until at least late December and another lone individual reappeared at Carlton Marsh from 10th December through to the end of the year.

None recorded at Winterset Res during the first winter period for the first time since 1993/4, although one appeared in reeds on the edge of Top Res from 8th–17th November. Nearby, two wintered at Pugney's GP until late March, returning from 6th October until the end of the year; one heard booming on 22nd March.

In the north of the county, Nosterfield Quarry reedbed sheltered a single on 19th–20th July and one was noted infrequently at Staveley NR from 17th September to 3rd October.

NIGHT HERON *Nycticorax nycticorax* A

1,0,0,5,2

Rare visitor; 42 previous records

Breeds throughout southern Europe to north-west Africa and east to Japan. These populations are dispersive and migratory, with juveniles moving north-west from July–November. Some free-flying birds are kept in UK collections.

An adult at Scout Dike Res on 9th February showed some characteristics of the North American *hoactli* form, with a distinctive head pattern and leg colour (RJB *et al.*). This record closely follows that of two adults exhibiting similar characteristics at Ripon in early February 2007.

Appearing on a more typical date, an adult stayed at Catton, near Thirsk from 19th–30th May (AW *et al.*).

CATTLE EGRET *Bulbulcus ibis* A

1,0,1,1,1

Vagrant; nine previous records

Breeds in France, Spain and Morocco. Birds from Spain are dispersive, whereas those in north-west Africa are largely sedentary.

A winter plumaged adult was discovered at Hellifield Flash at 1330hrs on 30th January (GT). Present for at least an hour, subsequent searches later in the day and the next drew a blank. Although only the tenth county record, burgeoning numbers in southern England surely indicate that the increase will continue.

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta* A

Amber list: scarce visitor in increasing numbers

Within Britain, its status has changed dramatically in recent years following a northwards expansion of its range in France. The species has established colonies in southern England and continues to expand its range.

The inexorable rise in records continues. In the north of the county, a single frequented Coatham Marsh on 25th July and two landed briefly on Skinningrove beach on 30th July. There were several records from the Harrogate area, starting with a single at Little Studley Meadows from 21st–23rd March. A single at Farnham GP on 5th June preceded several late July records from the environs of Ripon. Nosterfield NR hosted singles on 6th and 23rd August and again on 13th September, while one was at Ripon Parks on 11th December. Along the North Yorkshire coastline there were four records from Scarborough, including three north at Cloughton Wyke on 18th May, and seven records from Filey, including three north over Hunmanby Gap on 27th August.

Spurn logged a total of 516 bird/days during the course of the year, which is incredible when taking into account that the first Spurn record only came in 1993. Beacon Ponds attracted its first on 12th January, but there were then only odd records from the Spurn area until June, with almost daily sightings through to the middle of November. A mid-summer high of six on 17th July was a short-lived record, as numbers increased dramatically in September; up to ten were recorded on most days, reaching a peak of 17 on 16th.

Spurn's bird/days over the last ten years

99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08
2	4	6	6	6	5	14	28	75	516

Along the Humber, Patrington Haven attracted regular numbers from late summer, with 12 present on 27th July, rising to 17 on 31st August and eight remained during September. Paull Holme Strays hosted three at the end of June, four were noted regularly in July/August, with ten present on 16th September. Further west, smaller numbers were present at Blacktoft Sands, with a best of five on 1st August.

Inland, several waters in the southern half of the county held good numbers from late summer. There were regular sightings from Wheldrake Ings, with a maximum of six on 19th June and recorded daily at Potteric Carr from 1st July to 27th October; six were noted on 11th July, seven were present on 20th July and six again on 18th September. A young bird with colour rings at Potteric from 25th July to 12th September had been ringed as a nestling on 10th June 2008 at Terrington St. Clements, Norfolk. Edderthorpe Flash recorded its first on 23rd July, with almost daily records between August–October, including six on 2nd September. Old Moor hosted similar numbers over the same period, with bests of seven on 31st August and 12th September. After Fairburn Ings first on 26th April, up to five were regular from August through to the year-end.

A pair displayed at one location during the summer; no breeding attempt was made, although they remained in residence until late September.

GREAT WHITE EGRET *Egretta alba* **A** 2,0,3,4,5
Extremely rare late spring and summer migrant; 32 previous records (34 birds)

Increasing populations in continental Europe, where it has an extremely fragmented range. Most winter in north-west Africa and the eastern Mediterranean, although recently more are wintering in more northern latitudes.

The first was disturbed from reeds at Otley at 1000hrs on 17th April; after sitting in a tree, it eventually headed off east (JAp *et al.*). Potteric Carr attracted the next when a single was photographed on Huxter Well on 4th June; unfortunately it was harassed by Black-headed Gulls and soon departed (AAs). Presumably the same individual then relocated to Hatfield Moors, where it was noted on 10th and 20th June (JWo *et al.*).

On 1st September one circled Burniston Bay at 0825hrs before landing on the rocks where it was photographed (NWA: DM). It was last seen flying low towards Cromer Point and was lost to view at about 1000hrs; the first record for the Scarborough area. One flew north over Bank Island at 1030hrs on 14th September before dropping onto Wheldrake Ings; although it remained until mid-afternoon, it could only be observed from the viewing platform at Bank Island due to extensive flooding (RSS *et al.*). The year's final record related to a single over Swillington Ings at 0915hrs on 27th September (MB: PRM: JMS).

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea* **A**
Uncommon resident breeder, winter visitor and passage migrant. BBS 37/204

The BTO Heronries Census shows nationally a long-term moderate increase to record levels of abundance in 2007. BBS data, however, shows a decline in the county since 2004.

The BTO census produced a total of 468 nests from 40 heronries; they were well scattered across the county, with one of the largest in the north of the county at Kirklevington, where there were 33 nests in March, compared with an estimated 34 in 2007. Further south, the heronry at Scampston Park had 13 active nests on 2nd May. The Bretton Lakes colony contained 21 nests on 8th February, 58 on 24th February, increasing to 72 occupied nests on 7th April; at this stage the oldest young were already one month old. A colony near Luddenden Foot had 11 active nests, while the larger of two mid-Wharfedale heronries produced 81 young from 33 nests. A heronry near Cononley contained 11 occupied nests in March and the heronry at Thicket Priory at Wheldrake contained 41 nests.

Southerly movement was noted along the coast, with six south at Long Nab on 14th September and three in off the sea on 2nd October. At Spurn a total of 70 flew south and 47 came in off the sea. There was a notable influx in mid-September following strong easterlies, when several flocks were seen coming in off the sea. Spurn's record tally of 13 was broken on 12th September, when 16 came in off. However, the record didn't last long, as several flocks totalling 35 came in off the sea and moved south on 13th September.

BLACK STORK *Ciconia nigra* **A** 0,1,1,0,2
Extremely rare visitor; 11 previous records

This migratory species breeds from central Iberia through central Europe to Russia and Siberia, with small numbers in Greece and Turkey, wintering in Africa and South Asia.

One flew low over the car park at Scaling Dam during the early morning of 6th May (MAB). Unfortunately despite appearing to land, it was not relocated.

With none twitchable since the immature at Broughton, near Stokesley in June 1976, a lingering bird was always going to prove popular. Hope increased when a juvenile took up temporary residence in early August in Durham. Prayers were answered when the same individual was first sighted over Yorkshire airspace heading

north over Dalton, Huddersfield at 1645hrs on 20th August (DSy). Thankfully it made landfall at Stillingfleet Ings, where it remained from 23rd–25th August, although news of its presence only leaked out towards the end of its stay (HS *et al.*). However, it relocated to nearby Wharfe Ings, where it finally gave itself up to the masses from 26th–29th August (RSS *et al.*). After visiting Seavy Carr, near Melbourne on 30th August odds were it might pass through Spurn on its way south. Such was the case, as it was initially picked up north of Easington at 1245hrs on 1st September (AAH *et al.*). It headed slowly south, fed on the edge of the saltmarsh near the Warren before heading back north to roost. The following day, it re-appeared and spent the morning around the Warren/Clubley's Scrape, but eventually flew south-east towards Lincolnshire at 1000 hrs.

WHITE STORK *Ciconia ciconia* **AE**
Scarce migrant; escapes from Harewood confuse status

As with previous years, it is hard to determine which are genuine, wild individuals and which originate from Harewood House.

There were many sightings of adults from the western half of the county and all are presumed to relate to free-flying birds from Harewood. More interestingly, an adult spent almost two hours circling over Leven Bank, Yarm on 20th March (CB); a single overflew Tophill on 22nd June (RL: RSe) and a single visited Wansford on 14th July (RAr).

GLOSSY IBIS *Plegadis falcinellus* **A** 0,0,0,0,1
Extremely rare visitor; last recorded in 1997

Almost cosmopolitan, breeding in southern Europe, central Asia, through India and Indonesia through to Australia.

One headed south over the Triangle at Spurn in thick fog at 1100hrs on 27th July (IS). It relocated to Patrington Haven during the afternoon, before briefly visiting Sammy's Point and then heading off north the same day (BR *et al.*).

Presumed to be the same individual then overflew Boshaw Whams, near Holmfirth before heading off south-west on 31st July (BA) and re-appeared at Allerton Bywater on 17th August (JMa *et al.*). Thereafter, it took up a lengthy stay in the Lower Aire Valley, visiting Fairburn Ings on several occasions from 6th–13th September, but spending most of its time at Swillington Ings. It was last seen on 1st November, when it flew west past Skelton Lake.

This is presumed to be the same individual that spent much of 2007/early 2008 in Lancashire and it returned there after the final Skelton Lake sighting. The last Yorkshire record related to four over Blubberhouses Moor on 10th April 1997.

SPOONBILL *Platalea leucorodia* **A** 13,8,20,40,23
Amber list: scarce migrant and summer visitor April – September

Breeds in South-east Europe with outposts in Spain and the Netherlands, where its population has recently increased.

A sub-adult visited Scaling Dam on 2nd May, while Filey Dams hosted two on 25th June. The recently restored Northcliff Marsh at Flamborough offered sanctuary to a first-summer on 24th April and the same site pulled in three for an hour on 7th June. Spurn's first for the year tracked south on 9th May, while three immatures on the Humber shore there on 6th June eventually flew south. Finally, Spurn logged an adult south on 2nd July.

Paull Holme Strays hosted two on 28th June and a single visited Blacktoft Sands on 13th/14th April; 19th April; 26th/27th April and 14th May. Fairburn attracted singles on 18th July and 19th September, both around 'the flashes'. The Old Moor area hosted an estimated four adults, with the first at Broomhill Flash from 7th–12th June. Two visited Bolton Ings before flying north on 22nd June, although one returned to Old Moor the next day; it then stayed until 8th July, and made several brief visits to Broomhill Flash. Another adult was on Old Moor from 18th July until 3rd August and again visited Broomhill Flash on occasion. In the Sheffield area, one flew over Rother Valley CP on both 22nd and 23rd June.

Nosterfield NR hosted three adults in the late afternoon of 4th June, before they left at 1915hrs.

HONEY-BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus* **A** 15,17,21,16,67
Amber list: rare breeder and scarce migrant May – September

This long-distance migrant breeds from temperate Europe east to western Asia, usually arriving mid- to late May, and leaving from mid-August after a short breeding season. There is a small British breeding population, but passage birds can include continental migrants.

The first returned to the regular breeding area on 18th May and ten males and four females are considered to have been present at some point during the breeding season; numerous photographs taken in July/August

illustrated the presence of six males and three females during these months, although there was no proof of breeding success. Also present during the summer at one other site in the county.

The only migrant in the early part of summer related to a single south through Spurn at 0815 hrs on 30th June (ICW *et al.*).

A notable influx in September started on 13th with: six south over Ravenscar at 0858hrs, 1139hrs, 1200hrs, 1213hrs and two at 1330hrs (SH); a single south–west over Scarborough at 0900hrs (DJW); three singles south over Flamborough at 1015hrs, 1130hrs and 1245hrs (RAB: GCh: PC: CCT *et al.*); three together south over Reighton at 1025hrs (CCT: CW); two singles over Warsett Hill, Brotton at 1110hrs and 1325hrs (DHa: DP: ECP: DAM); a pale juvenile over Whitestone Point at 1130hrs (AF); and a dark juvenile over East Ayton at 1300hrs (DM) and another juvenile south at Spurn (DJSt *et al.*).

Coastal records again dominated on 14th with singles over Hunt Cliff (DAM), Lockwood Beck (MRKA), Skelton, (DAM), Flamborough (RAB: TDC: PC), three singles over Filey (JS: CCT *et al.*) and another at Buckton (MT). Two singles also tracked through Spurn; one lacking a tail that flew south over the Point at 0630 hrs (RScA) and a dark juvenile later flew south past Sammy’s Point and continued over the peninsula (AAH). The 14th also brought the first away from the coast, at Potteric Carr (JCa: RJS *et al.*).

A single overflowed Midhope (MW), Ulley Res (DWd) and another juvenile flew south at Spurn at 1420hrs on 16th September, followed by singles at Ringstone Edge Res (AC), Barden Scale (AGG: GH) and one at Long Bank, Spurn that eventually flew south (MFS) on 17th September. Inland sites then started to dominate with another single over Barden Scale (AGG *et al.*) and Thrybergh CP (WD: MAS) on 18th.

On the 19th two overflowed Skelton (DAM), a juvenile was at Ingleby Barwick (SJH) and another headed over Barden Scale (AGG: JHa: MTi), singles were also noted over Waverley Opencast/Treeton (AD) and Redmires (RDH) and three flew over Thorne Moors (RJSp).

The final records consisted of singles on 20th September at Gale Common Ash Tip (TB), Dewsbury SW (JHam), Winscar (DMPo: SPo: KWr), Nosterfield (AMH: SPW), Orgreave Opencast/Treeton (AD) and Blackmoorfoot Res (CH).

RED KITE *Milvus milvus* AC
Amber list: scarce introduced breeder and visitor from introduction schemes. BBS 7/204

There was a further increase in the number of breeding pairs and an associated expansion in range, with the results shown in the table. Although there were numerous sightings from many sites, away from the core areas birds are still relatively scarce. Wing–tagging has shown that some from other release schemes continue to breed in the county, with two birds from both the Midlands and the Northern Kites project nesting in the county; singles originally released in Yorkshire again bred in Northamptonshire and Perthshire. It is disappointing to report that two birds were shot, one of which was successfully rehabilitated and released. There was also disturbance at two East Yorkshire breeding sites, apparently from birdwatchers and/or photographers.

Minimum number of breeding pairs of Red Kites in Yorkshire in 2008

Area	No. pairs found	No. breeding pairs located	No. of successful pairs	No. of fledged young
West Yorkshire	38	37	34	68
North Yorkshire	24	23	17	35
East Yorkshire	7	7	7	12
Totals	69	67	58	115

Reference: *Yorkshire Red Kite Newsletter Issue 10.*

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus* A
Amber list: scarce but increasing breeder; uncommon migrant. BBS 5/204

This opportunistic species has increased in numbers in the county, and although most migrate south as far as southern Africa, a few birds now over–winter. Present in a record five BBS squares this year.

The population increase continues, with individual records now too numerous to list. In the north of the county there was a series of records from Scaling Dam, with a minimum of 12 birds through during the period 30th July to 27th August, including three birds on 3rd. This species was scarce in the Scarborough area in spring with a male and two females at Cayton Carrs on 27th April, the male still present the following day and one flew south at Scalby on 31st May. However, there were more records in the latter half of the year, including two between Long Nab and Scalby Lodge Farm from 14th August to 19th September, with three on 19th August and up to four

different females and three juveniles in the Ganton/Binnington/Willerby area between 24th August and 27th September. Further down the coast there were six records in both spring and autumn at Filey and seven records on four dates in spring at Flamborough, with four records on three dates in autumn. The first of the year at Spurn was on 25th February, with 44 birds recorded up to 8th June and following singles on 19th and two on 20th June, there were 35 between 19th July and 12th October.

Sightings were regular during the year at Tophill Low, Paull Holme Strays, Brough Airfield and Hornsea Mere with singles at Pulfin on 30th August, 6th September, 13th (two), 18th–20th, 28th September and 16th October and a total of 21 records during the year at North Cave Wetlands.

As usual, the highest numbers were reported from Blacktoft Sands where the highest daily roost counts included 15 in January, seven in February and 13 in March. Roosts were slightly lower in the second winter period, with up to seven in October, ten in November and four in December. There were six spring records at Southfield Res, including one on 28th February (the earliest ever record), with sightings on a further seven dates between 4th August and 18th September.

Hatfield Moors hosted the species on a regular basis starting with a single on 9th February; at least two were present from late summer, with a male still there on 12th November. Following a single at Potteric Carr on 19th March records from this site included singles on 5th April, 8th and 9th May, 29th July with records on three dates in August and September, one in October and winter records on 13th November and 14th December. In the Aire Valley a female visited Fairburn on 5th January. Further west there were records from Swillington Ings on 25th February, with birds noted on a single date in March, two dates in April and between 20th May and 21st October, during which time birds were present almost daily, with maxima of two birds in May, three in June, four in July, five in August and September and four in October. There were a further four records from this site in November and finally on 23rd December.

There was an increase in records in the Sheffield area with an estimated 12 birds reported during the year and 13 records from the Barnsley area. This species is still scarce in the west of the county, with nine records from the Upper Wharfedale recording area a notable total for the year. Elsewhere there were records on single dates from three sites in the Huddersfield area with up to two birds lingering at Winscar Res in August and September, six records in the Bradford recording area and the first record from the Cononley area. In the Harrogate area there were four spring records with additional records on 16th August, an adult female at Nosterfield on four dates and Flasks Lake on one date with a juvenile at the latter site on 17th September.

The number of breeding attempts continues to increase with at least 20, possibly 21 nesting attempts. It was a record year at Blacktoft with 20+ young fledged from nine nests, an additional pair nesting adjacent to the reserve and at least seven, possibly eight, nesting pairs at nearby Whitton Sands. It is remarkable that only 18 years ago this species was only an irregular breeder in the Blacktoft area. Elsewhere a male and two females were present at Brough Haven, where at least one female fledged two young, with a pair also fledging four young at Pulfin High Eske NR. A single pair also bred at Saltmarshe Delph. There were also records from Thorne Moors throughout the year with at least three on a number of dates in January, April–May and August–December, and at least two in other months, with an immature male displaying and calling to a female on 9th May.



Marsh Harrier •
Ray Scally

On the coast spring passage included two at Reighton on 29th March, with a single west there on 25th April, whilst at Flamborough there were three birds on 29th March including one in off the sea, with singles on 31st March, 23rd April, 1st and 9th May and 10th June. Spurn recorded eight singles from 14th April–12th June.

Breeding records included eight to ten pairs in the Scarborough area, with an increase in records from the Wykeham Raptor Viewpoint, and an encouraging increase in reports from Fylingdales Moor and the moors near Ravenscar. In Upper Wharfedale 22 young were fledged from 11 monitored nests and this species was reported to be doing well in the Washburn Valley. There were also regular sightings at Barden Scale, with up to 14 in August and a minimum of five territorial pairs in the Cononley area. At least 11 pairs were reported from the Harrogate area, although the actual total of breeding pairs was thought to be much higher, with notable counts including over 20 at Staveley NR on 30th June and a remarkable 29 in the Nosterfield area on 7th September. This species continues to increase in the Sheffield area but breeding information was sparse; also reported as widespread in the Rotherham area, with a best of 16 at Roche Abbey on 9th March. This species is increasing in the Leeds area, up to four birds were regular at Fairburn throughout the year and there was a minimum of seven pairs in the Hull Valley. A further increase was also noted in the Barnsley area and although there were no confirmed breeding attempts, territorial birds were present and possibly bred at Wentworth (three pairs), Broomhead Moor (two pairs) and single pairs at Snailsden and High Hoyland.

Autumn records included: two at Flamborough on 7th September, four autumn records from Filey and five through Spurn from 13th September–30th October. Some notable counts were logged on 13th September, the first day of the Honey Buzzard influx, including seven south at Pulfin and 15 circling together over Rother Valley CP.



Common Buzzard •
Michael Henry

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus* A

5,2,1,4,7

Rare migrant and winter visitor

This species breeds in the arctic and subarctic zones from Scandinavia eastwards through Asia and North America, and winters in small numbers in Britain. Occasional birds occur at regular moorland haunts.

The year offered the chance of excellent views of this charismatic species, with a long stayer in the first half and three wintering together on the Wolds in the final quarter. A juvenile was in Sleddale from 7th January–8th March and was joined by an adult on 2nd February (CD). In addition a single tracked north–north–east over Denholme on 29th March (KM: RHP) and a juvenile lingered around Scaling Dam over 28th–29th April (DP: IE: JRMo). In the second winter period up to three delighted large numbers of birders at Millington Pastures from 15th November, with at least one present until the year end (RW: CSR *et al.*).

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus* A

Amber list: scarce but regular passage migrant

The north–west European population of this widely distributed species is migratory, wintering in West Africa. Ringing recoveries would suggest that Scandinavian as well as Scottish birds pass through the county.

A further increase in records no doubt as a result of the increasing British breeding population. Following singles at Barden Scale on 27th March and Wakefield the next day there were widespread records in April and May too numerous to list. It was a good year around Scarborough, with one spring and six autumn records. One was seen on several dates at Fairburn in May, with occasional records from July to October. All but one of the Leeds records came from Swillington Ings where there were records on three dates in May, two in June, one in July with two on 5th September. There were nine records from the Huddersfield area, while at Barden Scale there were four birds in spring and ten records in autumn involving at least seven birds; in addition there were four records from elsewhere in the Bradford recording area. It was a good year in Wharfedale, with eight spring sightings between 27th March and 6th June, and 13 in the autumn between 22nd August and 24th September. Elsewhere there were records on 15 dates in the Harrogate area, three records in spring and autumn in Barnsley and it was the best year on record at Southfield Res with eight sightings, albeit some probably relating to the same bird. There were 31 records in Hull Valley recording area, including multiple records from Tophill Low and Hornsea.

In the Harrogate area two males and a female were reportedly present from mid–April until early July, but breeding was not suspected and a single bird was present along the River Ure around Hawes from at least 16th May into late June. There were a few other records on single dates in June and July from widely scattered locations, followed by an increase in records in August and September. There were only two records in October; from Potteric Carr on 4th and Wickersley on 8th. These autumn passage birds included a radio tagged juvenile male and female from Loch Garten that both flew through the county unseen on 22nd August; the male passing over Wharfedale and the female flying over Burley–in–Wharfedale, then through the Sheffield area on her way to spend the winter in Senegal, Gambia and Guinea.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus* A

Amber list: fairly common resident and passage migrant.

BBS 64/204: –23% (+4) 1994–2008, +73% (+18) decrease 2007–08

National and local survey results have shown a steady decline probably due to agricultural intensification but there has been some recovery locally since 2002.

There were widespread records from across the county, with numerous breeding records received from many areas, but no real indication of any population change. Widespread in Wharfedale where 25 young fledged from 13 monitored nests, only 1.9 fledged young per nesting attempt; the lowest productivity since 2003. It is still considered a widespread breeder around Scarborough and Leeds, with twenty territories located in one particular study patch in the latter area. Similarly reports suggested the population is widespread and common in the Barnsley area, with a record count of 24 around Old Moor on 13th July.

On the coast there were a cluster of records in late April and the second week of May from Flamborough suggesting passage, whilst at Spurn the spring movement totalled 37 south and one came in off the sea. Flamborough again logged an increase in numbers in September from 13th to 21st (when the influx of Honey Buzzards took place). At Spurn 48 flew south and three came in off the sea between 2nd August and 27th October, with eight on 2nd August and five on 27th September. Elsewhere singles in off the sea at Hummersea on 1st and at Filey on 3rd August may well have been migrants.

RED-FOOTED FALCON *Falco vespertinus*

1,0,1,1,6

Rare visitor; 64 previous records

Breeds intermittently from the wooded steppes of eastern Europe to the Baikal region and winters in South–West Africa.

The year constituted the second best on record in the UK and this was reflected in the county, with five in spring and a single in autumn.

A female at Pugney's CP from 9th–13th May was widely appreciated and became a particular favourite with photographers (DD: RT *et al.*). There then followed a remarkable series of records from Thorne Moors with two first–summer females present from 11th to 21st May, joined by a first–summer male on 11th May only and an adult male on 14th May (RJSp *et al.*). Few locations in the UK had ever recorded such numbers, although Hickling Broad, Norfolk hosted a similar number in 2003, five were in the New Forest, Hampshire in 1959 and six at Stow Valley, Stodmarsh, Kent in 1992.

There was one autumn record of a female north–west along the cliffs at Saltburn during the afternoon of 27th September (RCT).

MERLIN *Falco columbarius* **A**
Amber list: scarce resident breeder; uncommon passage migrant/winter visitor. BBS 2/204
There appeared to be a reduction in reports, suggesting that the population may be in decline.
Singles were noted from many areas in the first half of the year, with regular records from Scaling Dam during January to April and other reports during the same period from Marske, Guisborough and Saltburn. Along the coast the Scarborough area recorded a minimum of six birds in the first and seven in the second half of the year. Filey logged singles on four dates in April, while there was a slight increase in records at Flamborough, with singles recorded between 27th February and 10th May; however, sightings at Spurn in the first winter period were scarce. Along the Humber up to two were present at Blacktoft Sands on five dates in January, four in February, with singles in April and May. This species was also scarce in the Sheffield area early on, with the only record at Silverwood Pit Tip on 28th February.

A minimum of 23 territorial pairs were reported from various study areas across the county, including a minimum of 14 pairs in the North York Moors fledging a total of 44 young. The population appears to be struggling around the Yorkshire Dales with only three successful nests in Upper Wharfedale (down from six in 2003) with four young fledged from each nesting attempt. Four pairs all failed in one area of the Harrogate district, with only a single female seen on 14th May in another former breeding area. In the Huddersfield area, a pair on breeding territory early in May had deserted by the middle of the month. A pair with three fledged juveniles at Ewden Beck on 2nd July provided the only evidence of breeding in the general area.
In the latter half of the year there were a small number of records from widely scattered locations, including sightings in the north of the county at South Gare and Coatham Marsh from 2nd August until the year end. There were seven different birds at Filey during the latter half, records from Flamborough between 16th September and 9th December. At Spurn, 15 flew south between 19th July and 27th October, with up to two present on five dates in December. There were also 23 records from ten sites in the Harrogate area and it was a good year in the Leeds area, particularly at Swillington Ings, where up to three birds were noted from 4th August until the end of December. Blacktoft Sands hosted singles in October and November, with two there on 6th December. Records were also received from three sites near Rotherham late on and there were numerous sightings from Tophill Low, Paull Holme Strays and Hornsea.

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo* **A**
Scarce breeding summer visitor, scarce to uncommon passage migrant. BBS 0/204
It is thought that increasing numbers of this visitor from tropical Africa breed in the county, but its secretive breeding behaviour makes detection difficult. The number of sightings each year increases, but proof of breeding is difficult to obtain.

The first records came from Silverwood Pit Top on 21st April and Spurn’s earliest ever the following day. Elsewhere there were singles at Hatfield Moors on 23rd, near South Anston on 26th, two at North Cave Wetlands on 28th and singles at Loughton Marsh and Silverwood Pit Top again on 29th April.
The only confirmed breeding records were of pairs in the Rotherham area and at Wassands, although an adult and juvenile at Farnham GP on 20th July must surely have fledged nearby. Other possible breeding records included an adult seen food carrying in the Washburn Valley and a pair was displaying at Wilthorpe Marsh, Barnsley. In addition pairs surely bred in the vicinity of both Thorne and Hatfield Moors which again proved to be the best sites in the county. Following the first on Thorne Moors on 30th April there were a record number of birds in May, including at least nine on 14th and a minimum of ten on 20th; the latter included a party of eight together with a Red-footed Falcon! Sightings were then regular until the last on 23rd September.

Numerous scattered reports from across the county surely related to many more undiscovered breeding pairs. In the Scarborough area there were two records in May, one in June, followed by more widespread records in July and August; this included three in Langdale Forest on 17th August. Filey logged 11 records between May and July, while there were two records from Flamborough in May, four in June, two adults on several dates in July, followed by a juvenile on 2nd August. Migrants were noted at this site on 31st August, 1st, 14th and 22nd September and finally on 19th October; the latter the county’s last of the year. There were records at Spurn on 11 dates in May and June, singles on six days in July, 11 dates August, two on four dates in September, with singles on another four dates up to 28th September.

There were 39 sightings at Tophill during the year and regular sightings from Hornsea. At North Cave Wetlands there were two records in May, five records in June, one in July, six in August, four in September, including two on 7th; the last came on 5th October. Records from Blacktoft included singles during June, July and August with two on several dates in the latter month, with the last record of the year on 30th August. At Potteric Carr following two records in May, there were three in June, seven in July, six in August, on five days during September (including three on 14th and two on 15th) and singles on 1st and 6th October.

Along the western fringes of the county it was another good year for this species in the Sheffield area, with 71 records received from 30 scattered sites and singles were present at a number of sites in the Barnsley area during the summer. Further north, there were records from seven sites around Huddersfield. It was an excellent year in the Leeds area, with 71 records submitted; the majority was in the vicinity of Swillington Ings, but with a number from around Bardsey/East Keswick. Fairburn Ings attracted singles on sporadic dates from 23rd April to 4th October. There were 11 records from the Bradford area and records from nine sites in Wharfedale. It was the best year on record around Cononley, with a total of nine records and an excellent showing in the Harrogate area, with 61 records.

PEREGRINE FALCON *Falco peregrinus* **A**
Scarce resident breeder and winter visitor. BBS 3/204
The population is probably slowly increasing. There is a stark contrast in its fortunes regionally, with an increasing number of records from lowland areas, but many traditional upland nesting sites on managed grouse moors are now no longer occupied.

Outside the breeding season up to two were reported from numerous locations, far too many to list individually. In the north of the county the majority of records came from Sleddale in spring, Scaling Dam throughout the year and the cliffs of East Cleveland; a smaller number of records came from central Middlesbrough during March and South Gare and Guisborough between July and November. Examples of how regular sightings are becoming in the lowlands was evidenced by an all year round presence around Leeds; this included 122 reports from the Skelton Lake/Swillington Ings area alone with records at Fairburn in all months except May. In the Harrogate area there were at least four different birds at Nosterfield NR between 5th January and 31st March and up to three from 16th August to 28th December; nearby, three different individuals were present at Staveley NR between 14th January and 14th March.

Records suggest a minimum of 27 territorial pairs in the county, including 21 confirmed breeding pairs. There was once again a stark contrast between the number of occupied sites and breeding success in upland compared with lowland areas. In the north of the county [Cleveland] one nest was abandoned at the end of May, but a pair present at another nest site may have been successful, with at least one juvenile seen later in the year. In the Scarborough area one pair fledged three young at the usual site and another pair were present at another potentially suitable nesting site. A pair fledged two young in the Filey area and one pair bred just outside the Flamborough recording area.

In the Yorkshire Dales Upland Bird Study Group area 22 sites were checked: 13 were occupied, with six pairs only successfully fledging 11 young. There was a further increase in urban areas with an adult pair in Wakefield city centre throughout the year, an adult pair in Ossett from at least July until December and a pair was resident near Broomhead Moor area from 4th March until 3rd December, but there was no confirmed breeding. A pair fledged three young in a working quarry near Pontefract, a pair fledged two young on Eggborough Power Station and a pair in Keighley fledged four young.

At least one pair attempted to breed in the Huddersfield area but appeared to have been robbed at egg stage, although a report of two juveniles over the town centre in late June/July suggested local breeding elsewhere. A pair again bred in the Leeds area, successfully rearing at least two young and at Tinsley, Sheffield a pair was seen displaying and copulating in April; however, this particular potential nest site was lost when the towers were demolished on 24th August.

Illustrating the charismatic nature of these birds, the most popular in the county were at Malham Cove, where over 21,800 people (including 6,300 schoolchildren) were treated to spectacular views of the birds from the RSPB and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority viewpoint.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus* **A**
Scarce resident breeder; uncommon passage migrant/winter visitor
The species remains widespread, but scarce, with records from many areas in both the first and second winter periods.

There were records of up to three at many sites in both winter periods; for example there were reports from six sites in the Leeds area, five sites around Huddersfield, five sites in the Harrogate district and seven sites in the Rotherham area. Notable counts included up to four at Fairburn in the first half of the year and at least five in the latter six months. Four birds were heard calling at Staveley NR during the second winter period. Six at Blacktoft Sands on 17th October constituted the highest count of the last six months.

A minimum of 25 pairs bred at eight sites including 18 pairs at Blacktoft Sands; a juvenile at Filey Dams on 30th August was indicative of local breeding. Single pairs bred at one site in the Huddersfield area, at Tophill Low

and Staveley NR, where an adult with tiny chicks was seen on 10th June. In the Barnsley area breeding was confirmed at Old Moor, where a juvenile was seen during the summer and at Winterset Res, where a juvenile bird was caught and ringed on 3rd August. There were a number of records from Thorne Moors during the breeding season including an adult with two chicks on Main Canal on 14th July.

There were also 14 probable/possible breeding pairs at eleven sites; it was assumed to have bred at Pulfin High Eske NR, a single was heard at North Cave Wetlands on 26th July and also reported as ‘probably breeding’ at Wilthorpe Marsh, Carlton Marsh and Edderthorpe Flash. Single birds were heard calling at Bolehill Flash, Rotherham on 18th May and at a site in the Cononley area on 20th June. Two pairs were reported at Coatham Marsh, three pairs were present on Skipwith Common and it was recorded at Potteric Carr throughout the year.

On the coast two freshly arrived migrants were among the rocks on Filey Brigg on 22nd September, whilst Flamborough experienced an influx during north–easterly winds in November with five on 6th, 10th and 12th, and two on 17th November.

SPOTTED CRAKE *Porzana porzana* A7,6,3,6,5

Amber list: rare occasional breeder; rare summer visitor and migrant.

This migratory species breeds from Spain eastwards through Europe to central Siberia, with its main breeding strongholds in Eastern Europe and Russia. It is a sporadic breeder in the county, but proof of breeding is difficult to confirm.

Calling males were again present during the breeding season in the Lower Derwent Valley, with the first arriving on 27th April. Although duplication is hard to eliminate, possibly five different individuals were present.

CORN CRAKE *Crex crex* A1,3,2,4,3

Red list and UK BAP species: rare occasional breeder, summer visitor and passage migrant

An average year, with the sole spring record referring to a calling male in fields near Dungworth, west of Sheffield on 18th May (DWo).

A male was calling at Flamborough on 20th August (JMP), with presumably the same nearby the following day (GCh). A single discovered on Beacon Lane on 14th September was responsible for the finding of Yorkshire’s first ever Pallas’s Grasshopper Warbler (RJS); a search for the crane drew a blank in the afternoon, but hopeful birders were rewarded with a smaller, but equally cryptic species.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus* A

Common to abundant resident breeder; some immigration in autumn/winter

BBS 47/204: +56% (+13) 1994–2008, –1% (+9) 2007–08

The long–term population trend has been one of increase, but it appears locally to have had a fairly stable population since 2000.

Widespread records across the county with many low double figure counts and no indications of any significant population change. Notable counts in the first winter period included 40 at Staveley NR and 120 at Old Moor during January. Between 50 and 70 were present during the year in the Skelton Lake/Swillington Ings area, with a peak of 97 in February. Breeding records included 14 pairs at Blacktoft Sands RSPB and 31 pairs at Fairburn Ings. Breeding was also reported from a minimum of 11 sites in the Barnsley area, including 39 young fledged from 17 broods at Old Moor and 13 young from five broods on Broomhill Flash. Numbers were reported as stable in Wharfedale, but it was another poor breeding season in the Leeds area. The only additional count of note in the second winter period related to 64 at Snaygill Ings on 25th October.

COOT *Fulica atra* A

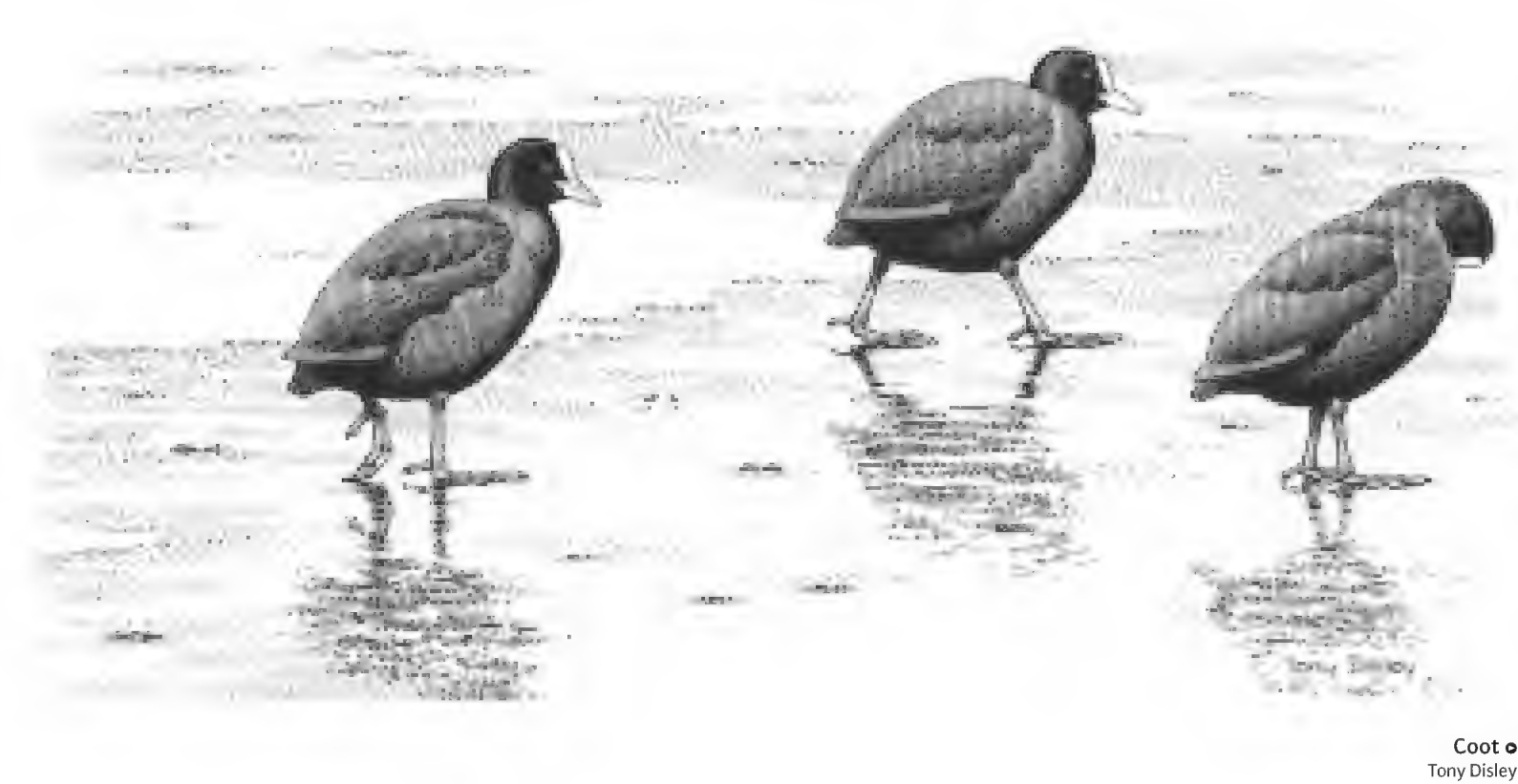
Fairly common resident breeder; some immigration in winter. BBS 13/204

The population of this Palearctic species is probably stable in line with national trends. Numbers in winter are swollen by immigrants from northwest Europe, whilst it breeds in varying numbers on most suitable wetland sites from small ponds to large bodies of water.

In January there were peak counts of 100 at Fairburn on 1st, 200 at Knotford Nook on 5th, 130 at Malham Tarn on 24th and 262 at Nosterfield NR on 26th. There were similar numbers in February, with 100 at Bolton–on–Swale GP on 4th and 339 at Nosterfield on 16th. The Skelton Lake/Swillington Ings area recorded 513 in January, 505 in September and up to 400 in the other winter months; Mickletown Ings held 341 on 14th December. Numbers began to increase at many sites during the autumn with bests of 348 at Flasks Lake on 6th September, 300 at Malham Tarn on 6th October, 325 at Bolton–on–Swale GPs on 7th, 241 at Castle Howard on 18th October and Farnham GP held 575 on 28th December.

There were widespread breeding records including 24 pairs at Blacktoft Sands RSPB, 63 pairs at Fairburn, with breeding reported from 20 sites in the Leeds area; however, success rates were often low due to the poor summer weather. A total of 180 young were raised from 37 broods in the Old Moor area.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Anglers CP	269	195	85	48	29	14	53	183	173	54	132	254
Fairburn Ings	47	438	342	243	177	342	825	1212	n/c	n/c	328	333
Hay–a–Park GP	379	89	44	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	355	110	93	174
Hornsea Mere	655	750	550	440	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	760	800	760	n/c
North Cave	139	131	139	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	102	102	76
Old Moor	324	284	282	226	170	235	324	459	468	416	560	424
Pugney’s CP	146	52	62	33	n/c	61	117	103	205	183	138	94
Tophill Low Res	73	108	91	55	30	75	171	162	308	557	511	453
Winterset Res	495	91	63	52	40	80	99	111	96	234	175	160



Coot
Tony Disley

COMMON CRANE *Grus grus* A9,5,41,5,29

Amber list: rare breeder and scarce migrant

This species breeds in northern Europe, wintering in Spain and north–west Africa, and migrates north relatively early, with many arrivals in March.

An excellent year started in April when an adult flew south at Spurn on 4th (AJS *et al.*), two flew over Tophill Low on 10th (MJF *et al.*) and an adult headed south over Spurn on 12th (AAH *et al.*). One lingered in the Wheldrake Ings area from 17th–25th April and singles flew south over Scaling Dam (MAB) and drifted south–west over Thorne Moors (RWB) on the same date.

On 18th two flew north over Rother Valley CP (RTw) and Brinsworth (PWr), with presumably the same east over Wombwell and Denaby Ings the following day (DP *et al.*). Five adults were seen over Hornsea Mere on two occasions on 22nd (MRo *et al.*), with the same party also noted at Aldbrough the same day (AFJ).

In May a first–summer remained on Flamborough on 6th/7th (PAL: RAB: PC: JMP *et al.*) with one over Hornsea Mere/Wassand on 7th (MRo); presumably the same adult was at Out Newton, Skeffling and Spurn on 10th May (MJP *et al.*).

The 11th proved to be an excellent day: a single south over East Newton (AFJ) and Grimston (TI) was presumably the same that appeared at Kilnsea later in the day (AJS *et al.*). However, most action was focused further west, with four over Blacktoft Sands and three north over North Cave Wetlands later the same day;

further inland an adult circled over Old Moor and Broomhill village before leaving to the east (KRo: SR: DMW: JWr). The first–summer re–appeared at Flamborough on 15th and 16th May (JPD *et al.*) and the month’s final record related to a single that roosted at Bolton Ings on 19th May and flew off at 0630hrs the following day (BE *et al.*). In the autumn a duo appeared at Ganton and Binnington Carr and then relocated to near Hertford Dale on 25th September (IA: RHA: PW). The year’s final record related to three SE over Ravenfield (Rotherham) on 26th September (IH).

In addition the regular pair again hatched two young, but only managed to fledge a solitary juvenile.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus* **A**
Amber list: scarce resident breeder, fairly common winter visitor/passage migrant. BBS 40/204
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 10200: GB threshold 3200

Nationally there has been a long–term increase in the breeding population following inland colonization, but wintering numbers show a slight decline over the past 10 years.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	513	184	198	297	198	82	66	140	235	144	130	75
South Tees	531	127	155	78	177	82	122	112	518	185	176	125

Although an average year on the south side of the Tees Estuary, the number using the north side of the Humber continues to decline. An average monthly total of just 189 is nearly 50% less than last year’s average (344). The Humber’s highest daily counts included 295 between Patrington and Easington in January and 150 at Spurn in September; as recently as 1994 Spurn recorded counts of 5000 roosting.

Other high counts along the coast included: 300 at Whitby on 13th January and 200 there on 27th December; 170 were in the Scarborough area on 21st October; Filey recorded 120 on 22nd January and 123 on 8th November and 85 were at Flamborough on 16th February.

There was a reasonable southerly passage along the coast between July and September. Typically Spurn recorded the largest numbers, with an autumn total of 4277 and a maximum count of 439 on 9th August; Flamborough recorded 497 on 8th August; Filey logged 40 on 6th July and 100 flew south past Scarborough on 22nd September.

There were very few successful breeding records along the coast, although the species is faring much better inland. Most sites had breeding birds back on territory by March and successful pairs were recorded from Fairburn Ings (two), Swillington Ings, Skelton Lake, Rodley NR, Leventhorpe Hall, Old Moor, Winterset (two), Carlecotes, Winscar Res, Ingbirchworth Res, Potteric Carr, Nosterfield NR (five), Farnham GP (three), Staveley NR and Ripon Quarry. Also good numbers of breeding birds were along the edges of the Pennines. Pre– and post–breeding flocks included: 67 at Marfield NR on 23rd February, 61 near Bolton Abbey in late February, 53 at Ox Close, Littlethorpe on 25th March, 50 at Mossy Bank Res in July and 72 at Thornton Moor on 3rd August.

AVOCET *Recurvirostra avosetta* **A**
Amber list: scarce resident breeder; uncommon visitor
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 730: GB threshold 35

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	0	0	5	135	162	101	0	1	83	0	0	1

It was another disastrous breeding season, despite continued expansion across the county. At Blacktoft Sands, 70 nesting pairs fledged only two young. As usual, many nests hatched young (c.70%), but these were quickly preyed by Black–headed Gulls. The first three were seen on 26th February and numbers peaked at 249 on 11th April, with numbers dropping from early July and an autumn maximum of 41 on 15th September; a late bird flew west there on 14th December.

Although Paull Holme Strays hosted large numbers at times, the species failed to breed there. A flock of 34 was present on 30th March rising to 223 on 2nd April, before dropping back to leave 24 on 21st April. Numbers continued to be low during the summer, with a best of 18 on 21st/22nd July.

At North Cave Wetlands up to 39 birds were present in April; 11 pairs settled down, hatching eight chicks, although only one survived. A pair at Nosterfield NR hatched four chicks but raised only three to maturity

resulting in the first breeding record for North Yorkshire, while the first breeding record for South Yorkshire occurred at Potteric Carr, when three pairs hatched seven chicks, although only one fledged successfully. Mating and nest scraping was witnessed at Old Moor and Swillington Ings, but the birds did not stay around to breed.

Sightings along the coast saw one at Cromer Point on 31st January, two on Scalby Lodge Pond on 3rd April, one flew south across Filey Bay on 12th September and briefly visited Flamborough the same day. A minimum of 45 bird/days were logged in the Spurn area between April and October, with a maximum count of six on 12th September.

Inland up to four were at Old Moor between 28th March and 5th May and a single appeared at Worsborough Res on 28th March. Up to four were seen regularly at Swillington Ings between 3rd April and 23rd June, with a peak of nine on 12th April, and a late record there on 25th September. There were April and May records from Fairburn Ings, including four on 13th April, followed by two present for a week from 24th May. Elsewhere four were at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd April and up to two visited Rother Valley CP, Pugney’s CP, Thorne Moors, Southfield Res, Hatfield Moors, Pulfin Bog, Eccup Res and Brough Airfield during spring.

STONE–CURLEW *Burhinus oedicnemus* **A** 2,1,1,1,1
Amber list and UK BAP species: rare visitor; 40 records since extinction as a breeding species in 1930s

A long term decline in the British population of this summer visitor in the early part of the 20th century brought about the loss of this species as a breeding bird in Yorkshire in the 1930’s. It is now an over–shooting spring migrant from the increasing population in East Anglia.

Continuing its recent annual status, a single flew high south over the Triangle at Spurn at 1700hrs on 6th June and continued south along the peninsula (JMT).

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius* **A**
Scarce breeding summer visitor; uncommon passage migrant/summer visitor

A summer visitor from Africa, which is widespread across Europe. First bred in Britain at Tring in 1938.

The first appeared at Old Moor on 14th March, with many arriving over the following week. Up to six were recorded from a minimum of 70 sites, widely spread across the county, but typically scarce at coastal sites. The only higher counts came from: Old Moor with 11 on 31st March, 17 in April and 18 in May; and Swillington Ings, which recorded eight pairs in late spring.

At least 47 breeding pairs were recorded from 32 sites, including three at Old Moor, Potteric Carr, Aldwarke SF, High Royd; four pairs at Flasks Lake and eight pairs at Swillington Ings. Breeding success was mixed, with some sites having a high success rate and others none; often down to predation rather than bad weather.

Post–breeding flocks seen in July included eight at Edderthorpe Flash on 3rd and 24 at Old Moor on 6th. Late birds were seen at Scout Dike Res on 30th August and 6th September, Flasks Lake on 30th August, Spurn on 2nd September, Potteric Carr on 5th, Pulfin Bog on 6th, Waverley Opencast on 7th, Lingham Lake on 8th, and the year’s last at North Cave Wetlands on 11th September.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula* **A**
Amber list: scarce resident breeder; fairly common passage migrant/winter visitor
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 730: GB threshold 330 winter, 300 passage

The wintering population had been declining, hence Amber status, but now appears to be stable. Small numbers winter on the estuaries, with spring migration of birds that breed further north usually peaking in mid to late May, and birds returning in August. Breeds in very small numbers both on the coast and inland.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	29	36	6	33	402	35	24	407	209	101	38	10
South Tees	0	14	11	10	61	6	10	100	7	2	0	0

Remains scarce during the winter periods, the best counts along the coast and the Humber were 30 at Scarborough on 4th January, 31 at Spurn on 9th, 18 at Flamborough on 11th, 15 at Filey on 16th and 70 at Paull Holme Strays on 21st January. Counts at the opposite end of the year were much lower, with 28 at Scarborough and 20 at Flamborough on 29th November the only ones of note. The only *tundrae* birds noted on the coast in spring were on the Humber, particularly at Spurn where up to 60 were recorded regularly during May, with a maximum of 112 on 25th May. At Paull Holme Strays numbers started to build during April with a maximum of 42 on 21st and peaked during the return with 214 on 12th August. Large numbers also passed through Patrington Haven during August including 334 on 18th.

The only coastal breeders were at Spurn, where 11 pairs attempted to breed but fledged just five young. Southerly coastal passage was light, Filey saw 20 on 18th August, Flamborough logged 59 bird/days between 16th and 31st August and 139 flew south at Spurn between 10th July and 11th September, including a high of 22 on 11th August.

Small numbers started to appear at inland sites from February, but became more widespread and in larger numbers in April/May when *tundrae* birds were moving through. The highest counts included 16 at Potteric Carr on 18th March, 14 at Nosterfield NR on 27th April, 21 at Old Moor on several dates in May and June, 19 at Edderthorpe Flash on 17th May and 14 at Swillington Ings on 27th May.

Breeding was confirmed at Rawmarsh, Aldwarke SF, Dewsbury SF, Calder Wetlands, Old Moor, Edderthorpe Flash, Swillington Ings, Potteric Carr and North Cave Wetlands where one or two pairs were recorded. Sites with larger concentrations included four pairs at Nosterfield NR, three pairs at Flasks Lake, three/four pairs in the Cudworth Common/Ferry Moor area, and four pairs at Grimwith; breeding success was mixed.

Returning migrants passed through inland localities from July to October and higher totals included: 12 at Edderthorpe Flash on 23rd July; 18 at Nosterfield NR on 6th July, with 14 there on 19th August and 14 at Flasks Lake on 6th September. The largest inland concentrations were at Hatfield Moors, with 30 present on 17th August and good numbers throughout August and September, with a maximum of 40 on 18th September.

DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus* **A** 95,33,69,22,37
Amber list: scarce passage migrant, more frequent in spring; rarely has bred

This species is a regular passage migrant, usually during May, on route to breeding grounds in Scotland and Scandinavia. Favoured sites include high ground in the Pennines and pea-fields in the east of the county.

The year started with a single on the beach at Spurn Point on 17th April (RT *et al.*) with another the same day at Soil Hill near Bradford, which was still present the next day (BS). One was seen at Grimston on 3rd May before flying off south (TI). The biggest flock came from Danby Beacon, with daily sightings from 5th–13th May, starting with six and peaking at 11 on 7th May. Also a pair spent the day at an undisclosed site in the north-west region of the Harrogate district on 7th May. Five were seen near the summit of Little Ingleborough on 8th May and five were present in fields at West Carlton on 18th/19th May (AFJ).

In the autumn, ten (three at 1305hrs and seven at 1445hrs) flew south over Spurn on 18th August (AAH) and a single appeared at Paull Holme Strays on 7th September (PGM).

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria* **A**
Amber list: uncommon moorland breeder; common passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS 28/204
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 9300: GB threshold 2500

Breeding numbers are still thought to be contracting, but nationally, wintering numbers have been increasing. The Humber estuary is the most important UK wintering site, with peak counts over 47,000, with most birds of Fennoscandian or Russian origin.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	11113	4511	915	364	1	21	1065	296	11338	7304	2041	8840

Paull Holme Strays hosted 7500 on 13th January and although numbers dropped during spring 1400 were still present on 9th April; numbers increased after the breeding season, with 7000 on 18th October. Large numbers were recorded in the outer Humber from August to the year end with maximum counts at Spurn of: 3970 on 22nd August; 4200 on 7th September; 4500 on 9th October; 10,000 on 15th November and 7500 on 15th December.

The only visible passage along the coast came from Spurn, birds flying out east in the spring included 80 on 30th March, one on 22nd April and 30 on 29th May. In the autumn a total of 131 flew south, 24 came in off the sea and 26 flew out east between 11th July and 10th November, which included a high count of 36 south on 7th November.

Large gatherings were recorded at many inland sites from January to April and August to December. One of the best sites was Old Moor, which recorded the following monthly maximum counts and a best on 13th November count.

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
3000	3500	2500	1000	0	0	3	2	980	5000	6000	4000

The Lower Derwent Valley hosted some of the largest numbers of any inland site, with 4893 present on 25th February; there were also 2000 on Fulford Ings on 28th January. A flock of 2500 gathered on North Duffield Carrs in early November. At Blacktoft Sands the highest counts were 2000 on 12th September, 4000 on 16th October and 3500 on 11th November. A flock estimated at 10,000 birds flew around Hetchell Craggs on 14th January, the largest flock ever recorded in the Leeds area. These birds must have dispersed rapidly as there were few other reports of more than 500 birds in that, or any other area, in the next few months. However, later in the year 2000 were near Compton. Other significant counts included: 2000 in the Worsborough Valley on 16th February, 1769 at Lingham in January, 1612 at Nosterfield NR in February and 2000 there in November. Elsewhere, 1000 were at Potteric Carr in January and 1000 at Hatfield Moors on 28th October.

Although it appeared to be breeding in low density, sites were well spread across the Pennine moorlands with what appeared to be a reasonable success rate.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola* **A**
Amber list: common passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce inland
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 2500: GB threshold 530

A visitor from breeding grounds in the high Arctic, this globally widespread species winters on the outer Humber, with passage noted in April and May, and again in September. Counts on the Humber regularly exceed the GB threshold. The national trend is, however, declining.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	1377	513	976	873	3367	68	165	328	441	1131	477	1099
South Tees	52	30	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0

Counts along the Humber were very good and the May WeBS count total was nearly a thousand over the international threshold, showing just how important the estuary is as a stopover post and wintering ground. Coastal records were quite scarce: Scarborough had one to three on 14 dates, with a maximum of seven on 12th January; Filey fared similarly with one to three on 17 dates, while Flamborough recorded up to five on just 12 dates.

At Spurn visible passage in the spring saw 244 fly out east between 26th April and 17th June, including 24 on 6th, 35 on 26th, 37 on 27th, 67 on 29th May, then 50 on 17th June. Autumn passage was light, when just 70 headed south and 15 came in between 27th June and 12th September.

Inland there were a few winter records, with three flying west over Swillington Ings on 5th January, one at Nosterfield NR on 11th January and a single at Pugney's CP on 17th February. Spring migrants started to pass through from March: one flew over Sharow Grange, Ripon at dusk on 18th and one was at North Duffield Carrs on 29th. Two were on Houghton Washlands in the Dearne Valley from 9th–12th April. A single remained at Swillington Ings from 10th–17th April and one flew west at Wintersett Res on 25th April. Birds in full breeding plumage were noted at Nosterfield NR on 27th April, Potteric Carr on 8th, Farnham GP on 9th and Swillington Ings on 8th and 27th May. A single at Thorganby Ings on 5th May was followed by two there on 8th May; a single graced Wheldarke Ings on 6th May. The last of the spring flew through Potteric Carr on 3rd June.

The first autumn migrant was a single at Lingham Lake on 16th July. One appeared at Nosterfield NR on 16th August and the following day brought singles to Wintersett, Thornton Moor Res, Flasks Lake and Lingham Lake. Singles flew west at Southfield Res on 12th and 30th August. One flew over Skelton Lake on 6th September, followed by another over Farnham GP the next day. One was at Kex Gill on 8th September, singles were seen at Hatfield Moors on 18th and 20th, and one flew over Old Moor on 24th September. A single was at High Moor Plantation on 26th and two were at Wombwell Ings on 29th September, with one remaining until 9th October and being joined by two more on 7th October. A lone bird flew east at Mickletown Ings on 5th October, while other fly-overs were recorded at Carlton Marsh on 11th, Cudworth on 20th and Swillington Ings on 22nd. Singles were at Dewsbury SF on 18th October and Nosterfield NR on 24th October. The last records of the year were at Old Moor on 18th November and Potteric Carr on 31st December.

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus* **A**
Red list and UK BAP species: uncommon breeding resident; common passage migrant/winter visitor
BBS 119/204: +41% (+6) 1994–2008, –11% (+3) 2007–08
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 20000: GB threshold 20000

UK residents are joined in winter by migrants from Scandinavia and northern Europe. There has been a long-term national decline in the breeding population, but BBS data suggests some increase in England since 1994, and the Yorkshire data supports this.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	11705	5078	71	23	23	70	276	1340	464	885	784	1357
South Tees	61	110	0	4	1	11	2	122	245	69	108	77

Apart from the WeBS counts, the highest totals along the Humber were 2300 at Patrington Haven on 20th January, 5000 at Paull Holme Strays on 22nd January, 4000 at Blacktoft Sands on 23rd January and 3200 there on 3rd September.

Large wintering flocks away from the Humber included: 2300 at Old Moor on 25th January, 2000 there in February, 1500 in August, 2000 in September, 2200 in October, 1864 in November and 1920 at Old Moor in December. Staveley NR recorded 3000 in January, while in the Nosterfield area monthly maxima included: 2960 in January, 1982 in July, 3930 in August, 3250 in September, 3564 in October and 2500 in November. On 1st January 2000 were at Wilfholme Carrs, 2000 at Snaygill Ings and 2000 at Skipton SF. A flock of 1500 gathered between Redcar and Marske in February, 1800 were at Lingham Lake on 26th July and 2000 at Star Carr near Scarborough on 29th December. There were 7406 in the Lower Derwent Valley on 25th February, with 2000 at Thorganby Ings on 26th December.

Breeding success appeared to be good in the lowlands, with a more mixed outcome from the uplands where the wet weather might have had more impact. Particularly noteworthy was a total of 108 young reared from 52 broods in the Old Moor area; 53 pairs at Nosterfield NR, most of which hatched and fledged young; 40 pairs at North Cave Wetlands; 35+ pairs in the Scarborough area; 17 pairs at Potteric Carr; 16 pairs at Edderthorpe Flash; 16 pairs at Ripon Park and 15 pairs at Fairburn Ings. There were also good breeding reports from the length of the Pennines.

KNOT *Calidris canutus* **A**

Amber list: common passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce inland

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 4500: GB threshold 2800

The Humber was the fourth most important UK wintering site for this species. Birds are almost exclusively of the race *islandica* that breed in northern Greenland and high Arctic Canada. The population is thought to be stable.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	11578	3753	6100	2468	4543	4000	8050	5735	16763	13900	7367	15165
South Tees	33	56	85	41	4	0	1	0	5	20	20	111

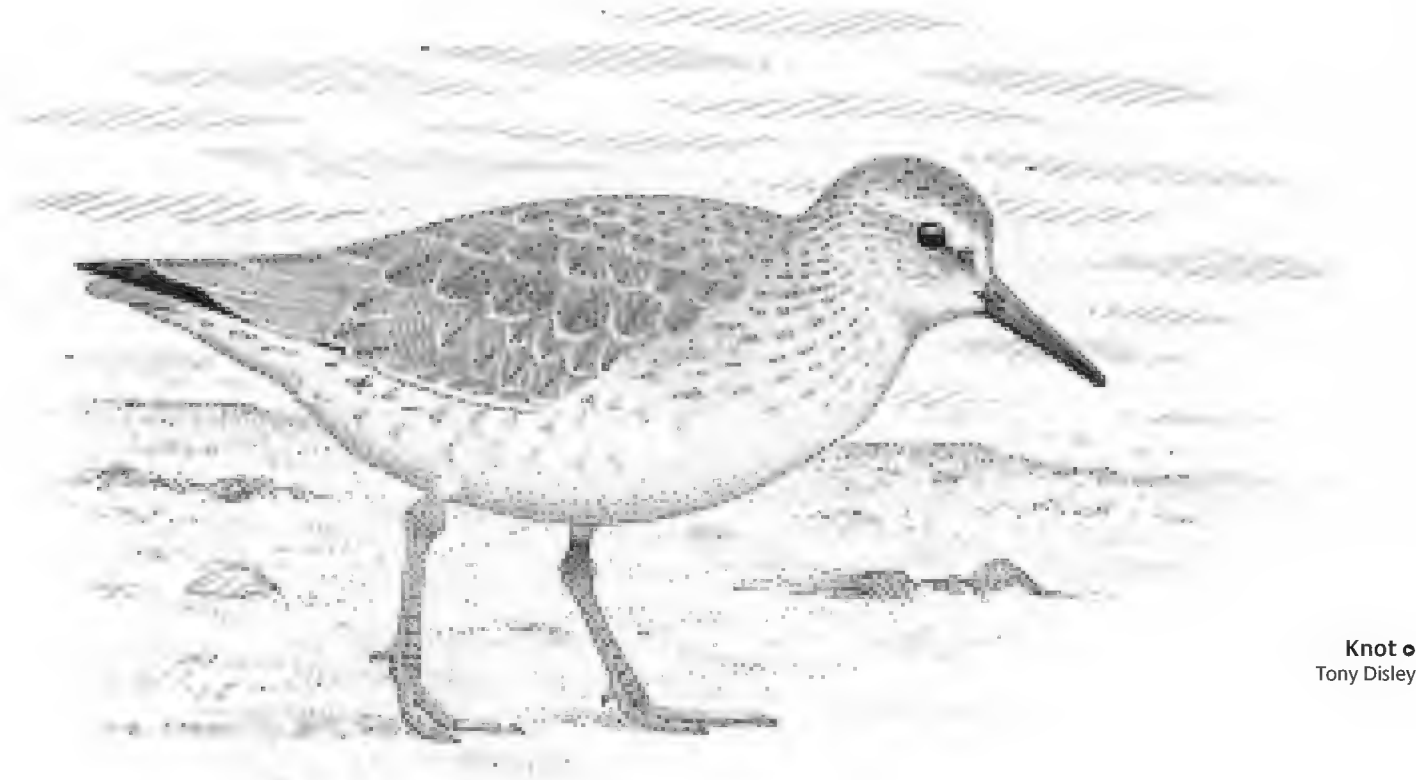
Numbers remained low on the Tees Estuary, but the Humber at Spurn held record numbers; these are not reflected on the WeBS counts, as most then roosted on the south side of the Humber. High counts included 10,000 on 24th February, 15,000 on 17th July, 20,000 on 30th July, then 25,000 on nine August dates, before building to a superb 65,000 on 20th and a staggering 100,000 on 21st August. Over 20,000 were recorded on eight days in September, including 50,000 on 19th.

A small wintering flock at Filey gave monthly maxima over the first five months of 115, 164, 140, 95 and 70, but at the end of the year the best count was only 55 on 14th December. Other coastal records were few, seven at Holbeck on 12th January constituting the only record from Scarborough in the first quarter; Flamborough recorded singles on 26th and 29th March. Spring passage produced 17 at Flamborough on 1st June, while at Spurn birds flying out east included 32 on 28th April and 20 on 29th May.

A reasonable offshore southerly passage occurred in the autumn. Small numbers off Long Nab peaked at 14 on 9th September. However, Filey logged much larger numbers heading south; a total of 2012 were mainly confined to 29th July–1st August and included 1591 south on 31st July. A total of 522 were logged at Flamborough, with a high of 260 on 2nd July. At Spurn a total of 2559 flew south and 351 came in between 2nd July and 11th November. Passage peaked in late July and early August, with a smaller peak in early November. High counts included 306 on 29th, 236 on 30th, 196 on 31st July; 219 on 1st, 200 on 10th August; and 114 on 9th November.

Inland, winter records included a single at Swillington Ings on 3rd January and two at Lingham Lake on 9th February. Spring birds started moving through from early March: singles at Broomhill Flash on 6th March and 1st April, one over Pugney’s GP on 20th March, one was at Swillington Ings from 24th–30th March, singles were at Potteric Carr on 27th April and 8th May. Two were at Winterset on 4th May and one was at Fairburn Ings from 7th–9th May. A lone bird was at Swillington Ings on 8th May, with another single there on 7th June and a party of 12 on 19th June.

Autumn passage was on a smaller scale, with singles at Nosterfield NR on 15th/16th July, Swillington Ings from 16th–20th July, Flasks Lake on 16th, 21st and 30th August and 14th September; Hatfield Moors on 8th August, and 18th and 20th September. One flew west at Southfield Res on 14th August. In the Old Moor area, a juvenile on Broomhill Flash on 7th September was followed three days later by a single on Wombwell Ings. Two were present at Lingham Lake from 6th–9th September and another on 18th October. Two juveniles remained at Old Moor from 15th–17th September, with singles at the same locality on 1st, 13th and 30th October. A single was at Nosterfield NR on 26th October. The year’s final inland record related to a single freshly dead in the grounds of St George’s Church, Doncaster on 25th December.



Knot
Tony Disley

SANDERLING *Calidris alba* **A**

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce inland

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 1200: GB threshold 210 winter, 300 passage

Breeds on the high Arctic tundra from Canada east to Siberia, and Palearctic birds winter south to Africa. The national numbers are stable or increasing slightly.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	2	5	85	61	309	76	357	0	0	116	7	0
South Tees	138	60	192	157	106	10	15	60	52	0	0	143

Additional records to the WeBS counts on the south Tees included 55 at South Gare on 2nd June, and 80 and 112 at Redcar during October and December respectively. Numbers appear to be falling dramatically from the Scarborough/Filey areas, formerly favoured by substantial wintering flocks. At Scarborough no more than two were seen on just five days in the first quarter of the year, followed by two on 4th May. On return passage two went south at Long Nab on 6th July and two were in Jackson’s Bay on 1st August. Singles appeared on 14th September and 20th October, with two on 28th November. Recorded in every month at Filey, but in reduced numbers; the highest count in the early months was just 50 on 22nd January. The first returning migrants were 12 south on 27th July and 55 on 29th was the peak. Numbers were similarly poor at the year end, with a high of just 17 on 22nd November. Likewise numbers were low at Flamborough, with a best of 21 on 1st March. The worst autumn on record brought only 36 bird/days, with a maximum of four on 2nd August. At Fraisthorpe Beach 83 were present on 29th March. There were records at Spurn throughout the year, with maxima in the first half of: 331 on 27th April; 352 on 23rd May; 400 on 4th and 425 on 5th June. Later on there were 415 on 16th August; and 650 on 11th September. A total of 931 flew south and 14 came in off the sea between 10th July and 13th September, including highs of 54 on 28th, 203 on 29th, 54 on 30th July; and 71 on 1st August.

Inland, spring passage was reasonable: at Flasks Lake singles on 20th and 27th April and another on 4th May; at Swillington Ings singles from 26th–28th April, with two on 10th May, one on 16th, two on 17th and three on 28th and two on 4th June. One was at Winterset on 27th April and singles were in the Old Moor area on 27th April; 4th, 16th, 26th May; 1st June, with two on 3rd June. At Potteric Carr singles were seen on 21st and 24th May and 3rd June, three on 22nd May and 9th June, and four on 30th May. Four were at Skelton Lake on 14th May, while additional singles at Eccup Res and Grimwith on 14th May and Hatfield Moors on 4th June.

In the autumn, singles were at Fairburn Ings on 11th and 12th July and Southfield Res on the latter date. An adult visited Old Moor and Edderthorpe Flash on 15th July. Eight were at Lingham Lake on 19th July, with a single at Flasks Lake the next day and one at Pulfin Bog on 21st July. Two were at North Cave Wetlands on 5th August and singles dropped in at Hatfield Moors on 8th August and 6th September. A single was at Broomhill Flash from 1st–4th September, one was at Waverley Opencast on 7th September, while October singles visited Blackmoorfoot Res on 3rd, Old Moor on 16th and Swillington Ings on 22nd.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta* **A**
Uncommon passage migrant, scarce in spring

Nearest populations are in Norway, followed by Arctic Russia. Winters in southern Europe and Africa, passing through the county on passage.

In the first winter period three were at Blacktoft Sands on 28th February, with a single the next day and again on 6th March. The only spring records related to a single at Paull Holme Strays on 29th March, two there on 21st May and singles at Nosterfield NR on 14th and 16th June.

It was a poor autumn and coastal records were few. At Filey singles were at the Dams from 11th–16th September and 20th/21st October; three were on the Lighthouse car park at Flamborough on 13th September, with one remaining the next day. While at Spurn there were just seven records, all of singles except for two on 30th July.

North Cave Wetlands recorded singles from 26th–28th July and 5th August. At Blacktoft Sands up to five were recorded regularly from mid–July to late August, but then absent until late September when up to four were present almost daily until the last two on 25th October; 11 was the high on 11th October.

The recently re–wetted peat milling fields on Hatfield Moors provided the biggest counts, with a flock present between 18th September and 11th October which peaked at 13 on 18th September. Other autumn records included two at Old Moor on 31st July/1st August and a juvenile there from 22nd September to 1st October. Singles were at Potteric Carr on 12th July and 9th October, Lisset Floods on 17th/18th September and Winterset on 1st October. Two visited Swillington Ings on 28th September, one was at Flasks Lake on 10th/11th October, with two at nearby Lingham Lake on 11th October. A juvenile accompanied other waders on a flash at Black Dyke near York on 13th October. The year’s last appeared at Swine Moor on 28th December.

TEMMINCK’S STINT *Calidris temminckii* **A** 33,14,6,5,8
Scarce passage migrant, mostly in spring; 333 previous records (359 birds)

This species breeds from Scotland eastward through Russia and small numbers each year stop over on passage at favoured inland locations in the county.

It was another average year, with six records. Brough Airfield hosted the first on 7th May (IM) and two appeared on Wheldrake Ings on 9th May, with one still present on 11th (RSS: DW), followed by two at Flasks Lake, Nosterfield on 10th May (SPW). An adult remained on Old Moor on 21st/22nd May (JG: PS *et al.*) and the spring’s last visited Nosterfield NR on 25th May (IC: SPW).

The only autumn record related to a single at Scaling Dam on 27th July (RCT).

WHITE–RUMPED SANDPIPER *Calidris fuscicollis* 0,0,2,0,1
Rare migrant; 25 previous records

This Nearctic wader breeds in northern Canada and migrates along the eastern US seaboard to winter in South America.

At Spurn, an adult spent a few hours at Chalk Bank over the high tide period on 2nd August before moving off as the tide dropped (JMT *et al.*). Previously almost annual, this species has become rarer in recent years with the last records in 2006 and 2003.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER *Calidris melanotos* **A** 4,11,10,15,14
Scarce migrant; 171 previous records (181 birds)

This species is the commonest of the Nearctic species occurring in the county.

All records were in the late summer/autumn period and included a group of four in early October. The first

appeared at Nosterfield NR on 4th July (TS). An adult then visited Broomhill Flash on 19th July (PK: JES *et al.*), with the same at Edderthorpe Flash from 21st–26th July (JHe: GJS *et al.*). Another adult was at Scaling Dam on 26th July (JR). There was a single on Hatfield Moors on 18th September, joined by another on 19th/20th (JWo *et al.*). A juvenile spent 30 minutes at Old Moor on 23rd September before being flushed by a Sparrowhawk (CHa: JHe: JTh *et al.*). Three appeared at Swine Moor on 23rd September (RL *et al.*), with presumably the same at Blacktoft Sands the following day (PCS); two returned to Swine Moor on 25th and numbers increased to four at the latter site from 3rd–6th October, with a single remaining until 12th October. A juvenile spent an hour at Nosterfield NR on 25th September, which left when flushed by a Peregrine (SPW). A flash near Black Dyke, York hosted a single on 13th October and presumably the same then reappeared just east of Barmby Moor on 21st (RSS).

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea* **A**
Uncommon passage migrant; scarce in spring

A long–distance migrant from arctic Siberia, occurs in varying numbers each year on migration to and from south of the Mediterranean.

Another fairly quiet year, with spring records confined to Spurn, where one to three were recorded on ten dates between 14th May and 7th June.

Returning birds at Spurn appeared from late June with the first on 21st, then recorded regularly from July to late September; usually up to four, but six on 2nd, five on 3rd August and ten on 14th September. The last related to a single on 11th October. Elsewhere along the coast, four flew south at Flamborough on 1st September and another four headed over there on 13th; the same day produced 11 north over Buckton. At Filey, one was at the Dams on 5th September, followed by another on 10th/11th, with five the following day and a single remaining one on 13th. Two juveniles were on Filey Brigg on 22nd September and finally one was at the Dams on 10th October. At Scarborough two flew south on 18th August, one was present on floodwater on Cayton Carrs on 14th September, with two the next day, and another single appeared on 2nd/3rd October.

Along the Humber three adults were at Patrington Haven on 1st August, with occasional singles there during the rest of the month. In September 11 (inc. ten juveniles) were present at Patrington on 12th, with nine juveniles still present on 16th and the last two on 27th September. Blacktoft Sands recorded up to seven between 26th July and 21st October, with a maximum of eight on 2nd/3rd October. In the Old Moor area an adult was present on 28th July, followed by singles from 11th September until 17th October, with two from 29th September–4th October and four on 7th October. In the Harrogate area, one was at Lingham Lake on 7th August and two were present from 14th–21st September. Flasks Lake hosted a duo on 10th/11th September and three on both 13th and 27th September. In October, a single was present at Flasks Lake on 5th, two on 11th and one on 22nd. At Lingham Lake, a single took up residence from 11th–18th October and at Nosterfield NR there were two on 10th, a single from 12th–15th, two on 16th and 18th, three on 22nd, and the last on 25th/26th October. At Hatfield Moors one was seen on 2nd September with two on 6th and one on 20th and a single remained at Paull Holme Strays on 6th/7th September. Six spent a short time at Potteric Carr on 9th September, two were at Lisset on 14th with one still present on 19th September, and a single passed through Swillington Ings on 23rd September. Up to two were at Swine Moor from 18th–22nd September. A juvenile resided on a flash at Black Dyke, York from 17th–22nd October.

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima* **A**
Amber list: uncommon and declining passage migrant and winter visitor to rocky coasts

Breeds inland in Scandinavian tundra or further north on Arctic coastlines from eastern Canada to Siberia, wintering on rocky coasts. The national decline in wintering numbers has stabilized with birds tending to remain further north.

South Tees WeBS counts												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
South Tees (all South Gare)	5	5	34	37	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0

Additional to the tabulated counts, records from the north of the county included 26 at Redcar on 14th November and 25 there on 22nd December. At Scarborough the favourite feeding sites are between the Spa and Cornelian Bay, especially the Black Rocks. Highest counts included 41 at Black Rocks on 12th January, with 47 roosting at the Harbour the same day, presumably involving many of the same birds. Subsequent peak counts from Scarborough harbour were 23 on 2nd February and 32 on 27th March; 12 remained on 2nd May and spring’s

last was in Jackson's Bay on 22nd May. The first returned on 24th September and by November counts in Scarborough harbour had increased to 25 on 14th and 44 on 28th. A count of 47 roosting on 11th December was the highest count of the late winter period.

Filey had its worst ever year, with 24 on 16th April being the best early on, while tallies of 25 on 2nd April and 30 on 16th May are likely to relate to migrants on their way north. Singles were noted on several dates in June, while 20 on 22nd November was comfortably the peak for the second winter period.

Flamborough recorded a marked decline. A count of 29 on 1st January was the best early on, with 18 present on 29th March. There followed isolated records on 31st May and 3rd August. In autumn, up to three were logged between 6th September and 31st October and November's high related to 22 on 15th.

It was a fairly typical year at Spurn, with singles on six dates between January and April. A single flew south on 6th July and singles were seen on eight dates between September and November.

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina* **A**

Red list: rare breeder on moors; common passage migrant/winter visitor. BBS 1/204

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 13300: GB threshold 5600 winter, 2000 passage

Has been declining nationally for a decade and is now at its lowest ever WeBS count levels.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	11483	3714	8563	7431	13849	881	8238	1543	6117	9166	1411	8624
South Tees	40	11	0	1	2	20	5	22	48	40	0	7

Numbers on the Humber appear to be still declining, and apart from the tabulated WeBS counts, highs at Spurn included 5000 on 5th May, 11,000 on 25th July, 6000 on three dates in August and again on 2nd September. Blacktoft's maximum was 570 on 13th October. Wintering numbers along the coast were very low, with the only significant counts coming from Filey, with 80 on 5th January and 62 on 21st December.

Coastal spring passage brought 387 east at Spurn between 16th–29th May, including 200 on 17th and 120 on 29th. Filey logged 533 south in autumn with peak counts of 116 on 6th July and 188 on 18th August. A total of 371 flew past Flamborough, with 97 on 2nd August and 43 on 16th September. At Spurn 2183 flew south and 760 came in off; passage peaked mid-July to late August, when high counts included: 221 south on 11th, 370 south and 211 in on 15th, 415 in on 16th, 270 south on 17th July; and 118 south on 2nd August.

Inland, small numbers were recorded at a few sites in the winter months, although with very few notable counts. In comparison to last year, it was a very quiet spring passage. At Nosterfield NR 25 were present on 24th April, but most activity occurred three days later. On 27th April the following numbers were recorded: 50 at Old Moor; 50 passed through Swillington Ings; 20 through Southfield Res; ten at Potteric Carr; eight were at Lingham Lake, six at Redmires Res and groups of five were at North Duffield Carrs and Skipton SF. Three days later, ten were at Gouthwaite Res on 30th April and 16 visited Flasks Lake on 10th May.

At least eight breeding pairs were recorded in the southern Pennines from the Sheffield, Barnsley and Huddersfield areas.

Autumn passage was well underway by July; 44 appeared at Lingham Lake, 14 were at Nosterfield NR and 47 visited Swillington Ings on 16th, with 20-30 there over the next few days. On 18th July 28 were at Fairburn Ings and 50+ flew through Southfield Res, while 14 were at Edderthorpe Flash on 23rd. August records included: up to 19 at Old Moor, ten on Hatfield Moors on 17th August and numbers peaked at 70 at Lingham Lake on 23rd. The highest counts in September included 20 at Hatfield Moors on 6th and 20th, 26 at Lingham Lake on 20th and 23 at Flasks Lake on 28th. Up to 40 were recorded on several dates at Old Moor in October and November.

BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER *Limicola falcinellus*

0,0,1,0,1

Rare migrant: 16 previous records (17 birds)

The European race breeds in the boreal forest bogs of north Norway, Sweden and Finland and Arctic Russia, migrating SE to winter in the Persian Gulf, W India and Sri Lanka and small numbers winter in E Africa. It is a rare spring migrant to the UK with dispersing juveniles occasional from July.

One found on the Humber off the Warren at Spurn on 24th May (AAH *et al.*); it was either located feeding continuously on the mud flats or roosting by the Tank Blocks until 26th. This record mirrors the last, which was present on the Humber at Spurn from 13th–15th May 2006.



Broad-billed Sandpiper ●
John Grist

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax* **A**

Red list: uncommon passage migrant and scarce winter visitor; has occasionally bred

England supports a very small population and most records relate to passage birds from Fennoscandia and Russia that winter in Africa, although over-wintering has been increasingly noted in the county.

Apart from one at Filey Dams on 7th February and two at Tophill Low NR on 4th March, the only winter records came from North Duffield CARRS, where there were 77 on 27th January and a peak of 100 on 3rd February. Numbers then dropped to 59 on 2nd March; 30 were present on 10th November.

Passage was subdued in spring, with seven at Blacktoft Sands on 18th March and a single there on 13th May. A lone individual visited Swillington Ings on 14th March, another was present from 10th–17th April, with a second bird on the last date; one appeared on 21st April followed by two on 28th May. Four were at Pulfin Bog on 14th, 23rd and 29th March, with two on 3rd April. Swine Moor attracted two on 28th March, while at Spurn there were: singles on 23rd/24th March and 12th/13th April, one flying south on 17th May with another single on 18th/19th May.

A Ruff stayed at North Cave Wetlands from 26th–29th April, with a reeve present from 13th–17th May. One was at Wheldrake Ings on 28th April, a single visited the Old Moor area on 15th May, and in the Harrogate area: a single was at Lingham Lake on 8th May, two were at Flasks Lake on 18th May, with another on 24th and one remained at Nosterfield NR on 28th/29th May.

A lek contained 46 males at one location, but there was no further proof of breeding.

Autumn migrants were in low numbers on the coast, with rarely more than five at any location. The first was at Spurn on 5th July where it was then logged on just 17 days to the last on 1st October, with a best of five; this mirrored the pattern at Scarborough. At Filey, there was virtually a continuous presence at the Dams between 12th August and 19th September, with a peak of 14 from 10th–12th September. Thereafter, there were a few records of up to four in early October, the last of the year departing on 16th. In addition, a flock of 17 rested on Filey Brigg on 29th August. Just 15 birds were logged at Flamborough, including eight on 25th September.

The peak autumn counts came from Blacktoft Sands, where it was almost ever-present from 22nd June–14th November with bests of 36 on 27th July, 52 on 20th August, 100 on 29th September and 121 on 10th October. Most inland wader sites reported regular sightings from July to early October. Higher counts included seven at Lingham Lake on 30th August, six at Nosterfield NR on 5th and 6th and 12 on 21st September. Peak counts at Flasks Lake were seven on 30th August, 11 on 14th (declining to ten on 21st September), seven at Ripon City Quarry on 17th September and six at Lingham Lake on 11th October. Seven visited Swillington Ings on 2nd September, 12 were at Lissett Floods on 16th, ten at Watton NR on 17th and six at Old Moor on 21st September. Ten dropped in at Swine Moor on 6th October and Hatfield Moors hosted an impressive 23 on 28th October. Late records included four at Swine Moor on 28th November and two at Potteric Carr on 28th December.

JACK SNIPE *Lymnocyrtes minimus* **A**
Amber list: uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor

Breeds from northern Fennoscandia east to Siberia and winters from maritime Western Europe south to Africa. There were records spanning January to April and September to the year end from a minimum of 53 sites, mainly in the lower-lying marshy areas. Higher counts over the first three months included six at Swillington Ings during the first three months, six at Beacon Ponds on 13th and 17th February, six at Winterset on 3rd February, five were at Wilsic on 10th February, four at Skipwith Common on 23rd January, three were at Wilthorpe Marsh on 17th February and three were also in residence at North Cave Wetlands in February. The last were singles at Spurn on 15th April and Beacon Ponds on 19th April, with two at Swillington Park and one at Dewsbury SF on 21st April.

A single at Flamborough on 14th September was the first back, followed by one at Fairburn Ings on 19th September and two at Spurn on 22nd September. Autumn migrants at Spurn peaked at four on 7th October, with birds in off the sea on 1st and 16th October, with two on 17th and 18th October. Filey and Flamborough both recorded five singles during the autumn. Skipwith Common proved to be a favoured location with increasing numbers through October reaching a peak of ten on 28th. Four were flushed at Staveley NR on 3rd November. Beacon Ponds held three on 16th November, three were at Blackburn Meadows on 20th December, and three at Wilthorpe Marsh on 23rd November had increased to four by 31st December.

SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago* **A**
Scarce breeding resident; fairly common passage migrant/winter visitor. BBS 34/204

Although nominate *gallinago* breed in Yorkshire, numbers appear to be declining due to drainage of lowland habitat and changes to upland environments. BBS data shows some increase in England since 1994. Numbers increase in winter as migrants from the boreal and subarctic zone move south.

The highest counts came from lowland sites during the autumn and winter periods, including: 40 at North Cave Wetlands on 18th January, 44 at Fairburn Ings in January, 50 at Bishop Monkton Ings on 20th January, 40 at Staveley NR on 9th February, 50 at Old Moor on 16th February and 58 at Swillington Ings in February. The WeBS count in the Lower Derwent Valley on 25th February located 245.

It appeared to be a good breeding season, with reports of birds on territory at many sites on the moorland edges of the Pennines and North Yorkshire Moors, but also at several lowland sites; subsequently, fledged young were at a number of these locations.

There were higher counts in the autumn: 107 at Lingham Lake on 30th August, 58 at Farnham GP on 7th September, 49 at Flasks Lake on 11th September, with 111 there on 13th; 135 at Lingham Lake on 14th, 50 at Skipton SF on 20th September, 76 at Fairburn Ings in September, 100 at North Cave Wetlands in late September and October, with 103 at Swine Moor on 26th September. However the largest counts came from Blacktoft Sands which held superb numbers in August and September. The first significant arrival was 66 on 14th August; this had increased to 154 on 26th, 200 on 4th September and a yearly maximum of 230 on 6th September. Numbers slowly decreased, but 50 were still present on 15th November.

A few coastal migrants in March included: 12 at Spurn on 18th, 18 at Filey on 20th and 41 at Flamborough on 26th. There was a more noticeable passage in the autumn. Scarborough recorded 11 on 16th October, while single-figure counts at Filey in August increased to 12 on 31st. September was the best month, with the year's maximum of 33 on 12th and 25 on 14th, with another high count at Filey of 28 on 23rd November. Passage was also good at Flamborough, which recorded 14 on 2nd August, 24 on 12th October and 16 on 7th December. Visible passage at Spurn saw 41 fly south and 71 come in off the sea between 1st August and 18th November, including counts of 16 on 11th, nine on 13th September; nine on 2nd October and 14 on 6th November.

GREAT SNIPE *Gallinago media* **0,0,0,0,2**
Vagrant; five previous records since the early 1900s

A scarce breeder in Norway and Sweden, which hold most of the declining European population. Smaller populations breed from Poland to Estonia. It also breeds east through European Russia and west & north Siberia and winters in sub-Saharan Africa.

It was a superb year for this rare visitor, with two records in September. An elusive bird at South Gare showed itself well on three or four occasions in flight on 7th September (NAP *et al.*); the first site record since 1976. A juvenile located in cliff top fields at Speeton Moor during the early morning on 17th September showed well at times throughout the day and was present briefly the following morning (KC *et al.*). These are the first since a single at Kilnsea in September 1996; singles in the seventies and eighties and three in the 1990s are the only records since the start of the 20th Century.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola* **A**
Amber list: uncommon breeding resident, passage migrant/winter visitor. BBS 1/204

The main breeding areas are Fennoscandia and Russia, and immigrants from these areas are noted on the Yorkshire coast and winter in woodlands. Small numbers breed. BBS is not accurate for recording this species, but nationally it is thought to be declining rapidly, hence Amber list status.

Small numbers were widespread in both winter periods, with five on Thorne Moors in January, three at Todd's Wood near Cray on 3rd January, nine feeding on a roadside in Wykeham Forest on 6th January, three at Reighton on 17th January, three over Staveley NR on 26th January, four at Timble Ings on 6th December and five at Buckton on 31st December.

Roding birds were reported in good numbers along the Pennines and on the North Yorkshire Moors, including eight at Guisborough Forest, six at Langsett, six at Morehall Res, six at Swinden Plantation, four at Crossley's Plantation and four at Wharnccliffe Woods. Away from the uplands four roding birds were present at Potteric Carr and four were noted at Thorne Moors.

It was a very good autumn along the coast, with several large falls and many birds coming in off the sea between 28th October and 7th November. At Scarborough two were just north of Scalby Mills on 6th October and at least three were flushed on Castle Hill the next day. At Filey, the first of the autumn was slightly earlier than usual on 7th October, and there were then regular sightings throughout the month, although with a best of just four on 31st. Up to five were present until 5th November, but this increased dramatically to 45 on 6th, a day on which there was a substantial arrival all along the north-east coast. They didn't hang around however, as only three were present the following day, although eight were at Reighton on 18th November.

At Flamborough, arrivals began on 11th October and immigrants were obvious until 7th December, outnumbering Snipe by more than two to one. The sum of 94 bird/days between 28th October and 7th November contained a dramatic fall of 59 on 6th November. The first at Spurn was on 2nd October, although the next was not until 15th, after which ones and twos were seen regularly to the month end. A good influx at the end of October produced 38 on 30th and 11 on 31st. The influx continued into November, with 30 on 2nd, 20 on 4th, 50 on 6th and ten on 17th. During this period, 16 were seen coming in off the sea, including three on 17th October. Occasional birds were located in December, bringing the autumn bird/day total to 245.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa* **A**
Red list and UK BAP subspecies (*limosa*): rare breeder; uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. WeBS Status – Int. threshold 470: GB threshold 150

Counts on the Humber regularly exceed the GB threshold. The increase in the UK wintering population of the Icelandic *islandica* race continues; no more so than on the Humber estuary which became the UK's second most important site in 2007. Flocks seen on the Yorkshire side are sometimes birds visiting from the main south bank population. The subspecies *limosa* has occasionally bred in the Lower Derwent Valley.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	305	248	28	44	2	10	35	340	237	74	226	228

At Blacktoft Sands small numbers were present throughout the year, with numbers peaking in early spring and July to October, with highs of 137 on 1st April, 156 on 17th July increasing to 354 the next day, 135 on 14th August and 150 on 24th October. At Spurn, a wintering flock was present during the first winter period; while the flock fluctuated, monthly counts included 200 in January, 203 in February and 89 in March. The flock returned at the end of October, with 95 on 26th October eclipsed by 335 on 1st November, which had increased to 521 the following day and peaked at an impressive 730 on 4th. Numbers remained high into December, with 420 on 14th being the month's maximum. Passage in the spring included one south on 30th March, four in off the sea on 24th April, ten south and 12 in off the sea on 27th April and 47 south on 4th May.

There were a handful of other spring records along the coast: at Scarborough singles were at both Scalby Lodge Pond and Mayville Farm, Cayton on 27th April, with one at Grove Farm, Cayton the next day; Filey had singles on 1st April, 2nd May and 18th May; while Flamborough hosted just two on 2nd June.

A single pair attempted to nest at an undisclosed site but were flooded out.

Autumn passage along the coast was more substantial; at Spurn, 119 came in off the sea and 30 flew south, which included 40 in on 27th June. At Flamborough a single was logged on 23rd June, followed by three on 24th and one on 28th June and four on 4th August. Filey fared a little better, three were at the Dams on 16th July, with two there on 30th July. Records were more regular in August, with up to four present on several days mid-month.

The year’s best was a flock of 26 which arrived on 30th August, reducing to 23 the following day. There were just two records in September, with the last on 6th September. In the Scarborough area a single on 29th June was followed by two south on 7th September and seven at Ganton on 16th September. Small parties were feeding on the flooded grass behind Redcar Fire Station during August, ten came in off the sea at South Gare on 15th July and two were at Scaling Dam on 17th July.

Inland many of the regular wader haunts recorded good numbers in both passage periods, as well as the occasional winter records. Another exceptional year at Swillington Ings with a record total of 255 recorded over 43 days. Maximum day counts were 60 on 17th April, 63 at Skelton Lake moving down to Swillington Ings on 26th April and 28 on 16th July. The first appeared on 5th April, with spring passage lasting to 19th May; autumn passage commenced on 28th June, with the last on 20th September.

In the Barnsley area the only early record related to a single on Broomhill Flash on 22nd and 24th February. Another appeared at the same location on 8th April, with three there on 11th. A maximum of 50 visited the Old Moor area on 17th April, falling to two the following day; these remaining until 27th April. Ten appeared in the same area on 12th June, increasing to 22 by 19th and occurred regularly throughout June and July including 13 west on 7th July. A single was at Winterset on 17th July and another was at Scout Dike Res on 26th; two again at Winterset on 27th were followed by five south-east over Moorhouse Lane Ponds on 29th. Singles were at Edderthorpe Flash on 7th and 29th August and at Winterset on 4th and 14th–23rd August. Two visited Carlton Marsh briefly on 31st August and a single at Old Moor on 1st September preceded 14 on 12th; four remained until 20th September, two to 27th October, with the last on 29th October. Two were also at Edderthorpe Flash on 23rd/24th October.

In the Harrogate area, there was an early single at Nosterfield NR on 10th February. Spring passage was poor, with one at Farnham GP on 29th April; another at Nosterfield NR on 2nd May was followed by two on 13th. At Flasks Lake two appeared on 11th and finally, three were briefly present at Staveley NR on 28th May. There were 24 records in the Nosterfield area between 29th June and 5th October, with maxima of 14 at Nosterfield NR on 15th/16th July and 20 at Lingham Lake on 26th August. Additional August records included two at Farnham GP on 10th and two at Staveley NR on 31st. A single visited Hay-a-Park GP on 1st November.

Good numbers were present in the Lower Derwent Valley throughout the spring and early autumn, with a maximum of 25 on three dates in mid-April; just single figures featured until the month end.

Southfield Res recorded the following: six west on 15th April and two on Went Ings on 17th, a party of eight were logged on 28th April. A single visited on 24th May, with 12 south on 29th June. In July five flew east on 24th and there were no further records until September, when 11 stayed on the flooded Went Ings on 9th/10th. A single on 5th November was unseasonal.

At Potteric Carr, one was on Huxter Well from 24th to 28th April, with a single on 25th June and two the next day. July produced five on 2nd; one from 8th–10th; ten on 29th, 12 from 7th–12th, with 14 on 10th. August records included three on 1st, one on 3rd, 15 on 6th and 16 on 19th. Singles in October occurred on 14th and from 25th–26th and the last visited on 2nd November.

Although a single appeared at Fairburn Ings on 5th January, the main body of sightings began on 9th April and ended on 21st September; sightings were sporadic and peaked at six on 12th August. Small numbers and occasional sightings came from many other wetlands, including: South Cave Wetlands, Tophill Low NR, Swine Moor, Eccup Res, Cononley Ings, Silsden Res, Pugney’s CP, Kex Gill, Hatfield Moors, and Rother Valley CP.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica* **A**

Amber list: common passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce inland

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 1200: GB threshold 620

Breeds in the Arctic tundra, the nominate race *lapponica* wintering on estuaries around the North Sea. Winters on the Humber, but many birds probably leave in February for the Wadden Sea. Has declined dramatically nationally in the last five years, and numbers on the Tees were particularly low.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	1176	404	850	111	124	283	179	287	593	228	510	820
South Tees	2	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	15

Good numbers recorded on the Humber at Spurn included 569 on 26th April, 900 on 28th July, 802 on 12th August and 700 on 13th August. Elsewhere along the Humber there was a high of 900 at Sunk Island on 2nd January and 440 at Paull Holme Strays on 5th February. Spring passage at Spurn produced 137 south and 174

heading out east, including 167 east on 26th April and 120 south on 27th April. Autumn passage was light and just 97 flew south and five came in off the sea between 5th July and 9th November; all single-figure counts except for 14 on 30th July.

Elsewhere it remained scarce along the coast with up to three at Flamborough from 1st January to 13th March. Two spring migrants passed through on 31st May. Passage at Flamborough from late summer was light, with records on only ten days from 2nd July–30th November, with six on 11th August and nine on 11th September. The first record of the year at Filey was two on 2nd April followed by ones and twos on five dates in April and early May, increasing to five on 5th May. Just 17 were recorded moving south in the autumn and seven visited on 23rd November. The only winter record from Scarborough was of two on 4th January; three were seen on 4th May, with one still present on 6th and another on 7th May. The first to return was at Scalby Lodge Pond on 28th June, with migrants being logged more regularly from 6th July. Although generally no more than two, four went north on 21st July, eight flew past on 22nd September, and there was just one further record of a single north on 1st October.

Records were much scarcer inland than those of its close cousin and most referred to a spring passage. An unusual record was one at Lingham Lake on 5th January. A single at Fairburn Ings on 8th March was the precursor to two south-west over Ingbirchworth Res the following day and a single headed over Ruston Parva after dark on 17th March. In April, a single visited Wheldrake Ings on 1st, a winter plumaged adult frequented a grass field on the edge of Evestone Moor with three Redshank on 16th and six flew east at Potteric Carr on 20th. Singles were at Fairburn Ings, Swillington Ings and North Cave Wetlands on 26th April, one stayed at Old Moor on 27th/28th, with presumably the same at Houghton Washlands from 29th April to 5th May. One was at Lingham Lake on 30th April, with another there from 8th to 10th May, another visited Swillington Ings from 7th–9th May and singles were at Potteric Carr on 8th and 18th May.

There were just a handful of autumn records: singles flew west at Winterset on 19th July and Fairburn Ings on 21st July, one was at Nosterfield NR on 30th August and another appeared at Old Moor on 30th September. Blacktoft Sands recorded one on 14th August, four flew west on 6th September and two were there on 14th October.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus* **A**

Red list: uncommon to fairly common spring and autumn passage migrant. BBS 1/204

Breeds from northeast Greenland east to Siberia, with a small population in northern Scotland, migrating overland and along the coast to winter in Africa.

The first flew over Grassington on 27th March, with the next over Redmires Res on 6th April with another at Filey on 9th April. There was a more widespread arrival on 12th/13th, when four were seen at Flamborough, eight were at Spurn and singles were at Swillington Ings and Southfield Res. Small numbers moved through the county from mid-April to early June, with the largest numbers occurring during the last ten days of April, including six at Flamborough on 26th, 18 on Star Carr, Scarborough on 27th, seven at Nosterfield NR on 27th, 15 at Filey on 28th and six at Swillington Ings on 28th, increasing to 12 the following day; this group then remained with the Curlew flock until 9th May. The largest numbers came from Wheldrake Ings, where the roost peaked at 136 on 30th April/1st May. Up to 12 were recorded daily at Spurn between 20th April and 22nd May, with just the occasional single to the last on 7th June. Visible passage saw 36 south, 36 fly out east and 10 come in off, with a maximum of 18 east on 28th April.

Autumn passage was obvious along the coast. At Spurn, three on 15th June were the first to return. Small numbers were then regular until mid-September, with the last on 16th October. A total of 601 flew south and 75 came in off from 17th June–23rd September, with highs of 145 on 10th, 71 on 29th July; 52 on 9th and 45 on 17th August. Flamborough recorded 166 bird/days, with maxima of 21 on 12th July and 63 on 2nd August, also nine flew east at Buckton on 3rd August. At Filey, just 127 were recorded going south, with a best of 35 on 29th July. At Scarborough, 12 flew south at Long Nab on 6th July, and a further 20 were logged heading south until mid-August. South Gare recorded ten on 12th July.

Inland, up to three were occasional from July to early September at North Cave Wetlands, Blacktoft Sands, Old Moor, Edderthorpe Flash, Winterset, Potteric Carr, Southfield Res, Swillington Ings, Flasks Lake, Nosterfield NR, Redmires Res, Pugney’s CP, Thornton Moor and Blackmoorfoot Res. Higher counts included: four west at Fairburn Ings on 13th July, eight flew over CSL, York on 14th July, four west at Redmires Res on 19th July and five flew south following the M1 at Higham on 17th August. The last inland records concerned singles at Swillington Ings and Old Moor on 28th September.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata* **A**
Amber list and UK BAP species: uncommon breeder; fairly common passage migrant/winter visitor
BBS 96/204: -19% (-21) 1994-2008, +18% (-11) 2007-08
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 8500: GB threshold 1500
Breeds from Ireland to central Siberia, including both upland and lowland Yorkshire. Breeding numbers continue to decline regionally and nationally, hence its UK BAP status, although 2008 saw a slight local recovery.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	2583	1613	1622	673	55	304	2194	724	1797	1627	388	1369
South Tees	54	58	26	8	4	6	6	88	89	46	13	12

Although the Humber WeBS counts were down on last year, good numbers were still present, particularly between Paull Holme Strays and Easington. Highest coastal counts were 89 at Whitby on 5th January, 80 at Kettleness on 20th February, 49 at Cromer Point, Scarborough on 19th January and 160 at Cornelian Bay on 12th December; at Filey 115 were logged on 16th February, a record 164 on 28th November and 120 on 24th December; while 52 on 25th January constituted Flamborough’s best count.

Visible spring passage at Spurn included 15 south, 23 in off the sea and 109 out east between 11th March and 6th June; birds heading out east included 19 on 30th March, 40 on 27th April and 31 on 22nd April.

There was a steady southerly passage along the coast during the autumn; peak counts at Scarborough were 26 south on 6th July, 15 on 10th August and 14 on 2nd October. At Filey, 100 were logged south, 73 of which were between 3rd and 6th July. The largest numbers passed Flamborough, with a total of 281 south and monthly maxima of 134 on 28th June, 19 on 3rd July, eight on 17th August, 23 on 21st September and seven on 24th October. At Spurn, 206 flew south and 74 came in off the sea between 17th June and 7th November; the highest counts were 36 on 22nd, 29 on 25th, 24 on 26th June and 21 on 5th July.

Several inland sites held good numbers in the winter/early spring, including monthly maxima at Nosterfield NR of 204 in January, 279 in February, 250 in October, 233 in November and 152 in December. In addition, Flasks Lake recorded 68 in February and 88 in December.

Other noteworthy records included: up to 57 at Swillington Ings in the early winter, 61 at North Cave Wetlands on 1st January, 100 at Bolton-on-Swale GP on 4th February, 111 in the Aire Valley on 4th March, with 250 at Skipton SF on the same date. Langsett attracted 65 on 13th March, followed by 74 through Eccup Res on 21st March. However the largest numbers came from Wharfedale, with a maximum of 430 at Denton on 1st January and 260 there on 9th November; additional counts were 300 near Burley in January, 275 at Otley on 17th February and 120 at Middleton on 28th February.

Breeding records were received from many sites along the length of the Pennines and on the North Yorkshire Moors, with varying success. Away from the uplands, breeding pairs were present at Fairburn Ings, Ellington Ings, and Nosterfield NR.

Post-breeding activity included 55 through Old Moor on 1st July, 200 at Ben Rhydding GP on 12th July, 81 south over North Cave on 6th August and up to 66 at Swillington Ings during August.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos* **A**
Amber list: uncommon breeder in north and west; passage migrant elsewhere. BBS 5/204
Breeds on stony upland rivers and reservoirs in the county, migrating south to winter as far as southern Africa. Passage includes birds moving to and from breeding grounds in Scotland and Fennoscandia. Has been declining across all European countries since the 1990s.

A single over-wintered at Swinsty Res in the Bradford area; first seen in December 2007, it was present until 9th March. Spring’s first arrival appeared early at Rodley NR on 26th March, followed by singles at Ulley CP on 3rd, Swillington Ings and Scout Dike Res on 5th and Welton Water on 6th April. There was a more widespread arrival during the next two weeks and migrants continued to be seen at low-lying wetlands until late May and then again from July to late September. Usually counts failed to exceed three in spring and six in autumn, although five were at Hatfield Moors on 24th May, six at Spurn on 27th and eight at Gouthwaite Res on 31st May.

Breeding reports came from many upland sites; strongholds appear to be in the Upper Wharfedale and Harrogate areas, where ten pairs were present at Grimwith and several pairs were at Gouthwaite Res, Scar House Res and Flasks Lake. Other breeding reports came from Scaling Dam, Upper and Lower Windleden Reservoirs, Winscar Res, Broomhead Res, Redmires Res, Langsett Res, Deerhill Res, Dovestones, Harrop Dale, Yeomen Hey Res and Wessenden Lodge.

Most appreciable numbers occurred in July, with bests of: nine at Scaling Dam on 24th, 13 in the Beacon Ponds/Sammy’s Point area on 18th, with 21 present on 25th July, 11 were at Filey Dams on 25th, with seven at

nearby Amtree Park on 26th and eight at North Cave Wetlands on 28th. Seven were at Swillington Ings on 18th July and nine there on 1st August, 14 visited Ingbirchworth Res on 2nd August, 13 were in the Old Moor area on 2nd August and Wykeham Lakes hosted five on 20th August. Late records saw two at Scaling Dam on 2nd October, singles at Old Moor the following day and Orgreave Lagoon on 5th, while two were at Potteric Carr on 13th and a single stayed from 19th–21st October.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus* **A**
Amber list: uncommon passage migrant, more numerous in autumn: some over-winter. BBS 1/204
Breeds in the boreal zone from Norway eastwards, occurring on passage at inland waters and gravel pits and occasionally in winter on freshwater streams.

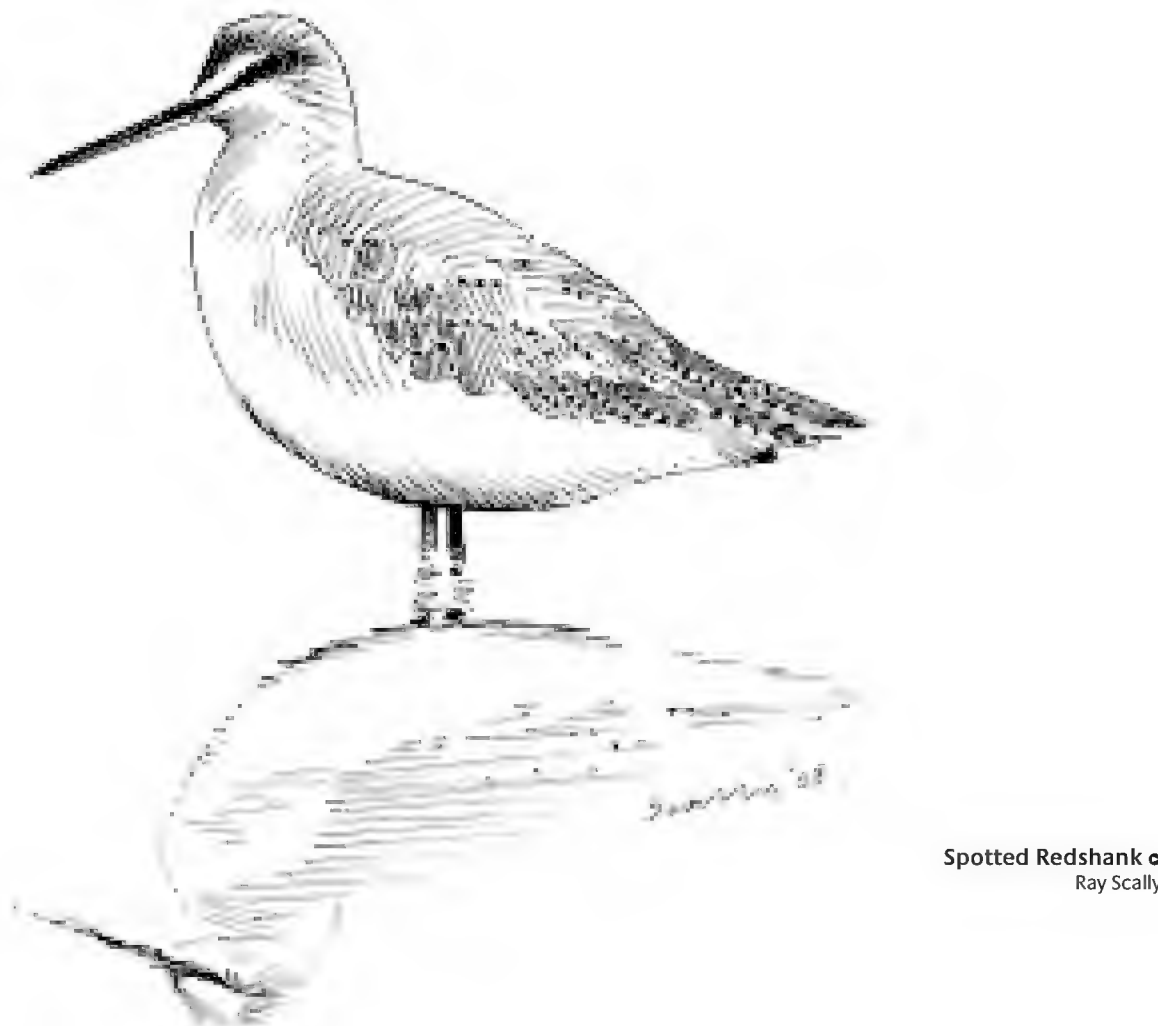
Wintering birds were well scattered, with up to two at: Fairburn Ings, Wilthorpe Marsh, Potteric Carr, Snaygill Ings, Skipton SF, Ulley CP, Dewsbury SF, Blackburn Meadows, Aldwarke SF, Thrybergh Tip, Cononley Ings, Kelk and Calder Wetlands. During the same period up to four were at Edderthorpe Flash and up to five at Old Moor and Knostrop SF.

Most coastal sightings occurred in April and May and again from July to early September. Spring records were few, with only a handful of records from Scarborough, Filey, Flamborough and Spurn. Elsewhere, sightings remained scarce in spring: up to three were seen at Old Moor in April and early May, one was at the River Aire at Woodlesford on 6th April, one visited Blacktoft Sands on 9th April, two at Thornhill on 28th April, two at Fewston Res on 3rd May, one was at North Cave Wetlands on 6th May, two were at Potteric Carr on 7th May, with another on 14th/15th May.

Returning birds appeared from late June, with the first at Potteric Carr on 18th, followed by two at Flamborough and Spurn and a single at North Cave Wetlands on 25th. There were widespread arrivals from 1st July, with many sites recording up to six until late September and up to two until November. The higher counts included: nine at Spurn on 25th and eight on 29th July, Old Moor recorded highs of 14 on 31st July and 4th August, 13 in September and 11 in October. Eight were at Filey Dams on 1st August and also at Fairburn Ings in early August, 11 visited Edderthorpe Flash on 13th August, and floodwater at Binnington Carr near Scarborough held 11 on 19th September.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus* **A**
Amber list: uncommon passage migrant; occasionally over-winters
A passage migrant from northern Scandinavia and subarctic regions further east.

Blacktoft Sands remains the favourite site, where it was recorded in every month. Generally, high single-figure counts until the August to October period when low teen counts were regular and a maximum of 23 was recorded on 4th October.



Spotted Redshank ◉
Ray Scally

A single was seen intermittently around Spurn from 29th February to 4th April, with further spring singles on 28th April, 10th May and 8th June. Other spring records included one at Cayton from 25th–29th April, North Cave Wetlands on 1st May, Nosterfield NR on 4th May and Filey Dams on 28th May.

Records from the east of the county during the summer/autumn included singles at Scaling Dam on 26th August, 4th and 10th September; one over Scalby Lodge Pond on 25th June and further singles on 3rd July, 18th August and 21st September.

Filey recorded two on 19th August, one on 23rd August and two on 6th September, while at Spurn singles were seen on seven dates in August, and then regularly in September, with two on 19th and five on 21st. There were just five singles in October, with the last on 24th. A late bird was seen at Beacon Ponds on 20th December.

Inland three flew west at Potteric Carr on 26th July, one was at Hatfield Moors on 17th August, with another there on 20th September. A lone juvenile was at Flasks Lake on 6th August, one remained at Nosterfield NR on 18th/19th August and another flew over Littlethorpe on 23rd August. Two were at Wintersett on 30th August, with one seen at Old Moor on ten dates between 30th August and 24th September. At Southfield Res singles were recorded on 3rd and 6th September, with two there on 14th, when another duo appeared at Fairburn Ings. Two were at Swine Moor on 6th/7th September, with three there on 10th. Singles appeared at North Cave Wetlands on 12th and 17th–19th September, with another on 16th November. A single visited Watton NR on 21st September, four were present at Paull Holme Strays on 11th October, with two still on 26th October. Two appeared briefly at Nosterfield NR on 24th October.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia* **A**

Uncommon passage migrant; occasionally winters

Breeds in north and west Scotland east through northern Scandinavia to Kamchatka. Although wintering in the UK in record numbers, birds generally pass through the county to winter further south.

A single over-wintered in the Ripon City Quarry/ Nicholson’s Lagoon area from January to mid April and again from early November to the year end. The first spring migrant arrived at Spurn on 4th April, with the next again at Spurn on 22nd April and four were then present on 27th. Spurn then logged up to two on 11 dates in May, with three on 11th, followed by singles on three dates in early June. Flamborough recorded a single on 5th May, three on 8th and one on 23rd May. Filey’s first came on 25th April, with two on 5th May and a single on 27th May, while in the Scarborough area up to two were recorded on 14 dates between 18th April and 18th May. Singles visited Scaling Dam on 22nd April, 6th and 20th May.

Inland up to two were present at Blacktoft Sands on nine dates between 22nd April and 2nd June. One was at North Cave Wetlands on 7th May, with three on 13th and one on 20th. Singles visited Swine Moor on 14th April and 5th May, with another at Tophill Low on the latter date. Swillington Ings recorded its first on 12th April and then had up to three on ten days until the last on May 15th. In the Barnsley area one at Old Moor on 17th April was followed by two at Wintersett on 27th April. A single remained at Edderthorpe Flash from 1st–9th, with the same on 13th May. At Wintersett, a single was present on 4th May with two there on 8th May, one of which remained until the following morning. The Harrogate area produced three at Lingham Lake on 26th April; singles were then at Ripon City Quarry on 12th/13th May, Lingham Lake on 24th and lastly, Nosterfield NR on 31st May. Potteric Carr recorded one on 6th/7th May, three on 29th, two on 30th and 31st May and one on 1st June. Elsewhere, one flew north over Rother Valley CP on 19th April, one was at Hatfield Moors on 24th April and Thorne Moors hosted a single on 18th May.

The first to return appeared from late June, with peak counts in August and few records after early October. The best coastal counts were ten in Jackson’s Bay, Scarborough on 18th August; 11 south at Filey also on 18th August; six at Buckton on 29th August and a flock of 37 flew south at Flamborough on 12th September. Spurn’s first to return appeared on 24th June, then birds were almost daily from July to September, with seven on 29th July; 23 on 1st August, ten on 3rd August; and 12 on 12th September. Up to three were recorded on 12 dates in October, with the last two on 27th.

Unusually there were no double-figure counts from inland sites, with larger concentrations including: eight at Swine Moor on 18th July, nine at Blacktoft Sands on 1st August, nine at Fairburn Ings on 3rd, six at Hatfield Moors on 17th, eight at North Cave Wetlands on 18th August, seven at Old Moor on 30th, six at Flasks Lake on 30th August and 3rd September. Late singles dropped in at Staveley NR on 27th October and Old Moor on 12th November.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS *Tringa flavipes*

0,2,0,0,1

Very rare visitor; ten previous records

Breeds throughout much of subarctic Alaska & Canada, east to James Bay. Migrates through USA, where some overwinter, but the majority winter from Caribbean and Central America to Chile and Argentina.

An adult was widely admired and photographed at Swine Moor, near Beverley from 22nd–26th April (EJH: RL *et al.*). This constitutes the first record since two in 2005; an adult at Tophill Low in August and a juvenile at Filey Dams in September. Eight of the 11 records are from the eastern half of the county, including a disproportionate five from the Scarborough/Flamborough section of coastline.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola* **A**

Amber list: scarce passage migrant in spring and autumn

Like the previous species, breeds in the boreal zone, but does breed in northern Scotland and winters further south in the Tropics.

Records increased compared with the previous year, with the majority of sightings typically in May, July and August. Early records included a single at Swillington Ings on 22nd April, two at Swine Moor from 24th, three passed through Filey Dams on 25th and one visited Wheldrake Ings on 27th. Four were present at Swine Moor on 1st May, with five there on 11th May and with four still present on 14th, dropping to two on 15th and a single on 23rd May.

At Scalby Lodge Pond there were six records in May: one on 3rd, with a different bird present on 4th–5th, three on 10th, with a single still present on 11th/12th. A new bird on 18th stayed until 20th and the last of the spring appeared on 29th May. Other May records included one at Filey on 4th; a single at Flamborough on 8th/9th, and another on 24th; singles at Spurn on 4th, 15th and 19th; one at North Cave Wetlands on 4th May; singles at Fairburn Ings on six days during May; singles on Old Moor on 2nd and 8th; a lone individual at Wilthorpe Marsh flood meadows from 7th–10th May; two on Wombwell Ings on 11th/12th; singles at Swillington Ings on 15th/16th, 19th and 28th May; one at Potteric Carr on 7th and 9th; singles at Dewsbury SF and Wilthorpe Marsh on 8th; singles at Nosterfield NR on 10th and 18th, with three present on 17th; a single at Hellifield Flash on 25th/26th and Lingham Lake hosted another on 26th.

The first returned to Blacktoft Sands on 16th June, followed by two more on 30th. July records included one at Filey Dams on 1st; one at Old Moor on 11th; a single at Scalby Lodge Pond on 26th/27th; singles at Spurn on 13th, 26th, 29th and 31st; and singles at North Cave Wetlands on 10th and 18th.

In August, two flew south at Spurn on 4th, as did further duos on 12th and 15th; one was at Filey Dams on 6th and two remained in residence there from 20th–25th August. Additional August records included: one at Swine Moor on 1st and two on 20th/21st; singles on Broomhill Flash on 1st and 12th; singles at both Wintersett and Blacktoft Sands on 8th; one at Wheldrake Ings on 10th, another at Nosterfield NR on 23rd and finally a single at Thorganby Ings on 27th.

Records started to drop in September and were confined to singles at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd September; north–west over Staveley NR on 10th; Blacktoft Sands on 12th and 20th; in the Scarborough area on 14th and 19th September. The year ended with a very late single at Barmby Moor from 13th–21st October.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus* **A**

Amber list: uncommon breeder; common passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS 12/204

WeBS Status – Int. threshold 1300: GB threshold 1200

Nationally wintering numbers have been falling. Small numbers breed in saltmarsh along the Humber, only a few elsewhere on grassy upland sites and some wet meadows, but nationally the breeding population is also declining.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	1620	1289	995	1758	433	107	1489	1337	2372	4141	723	1581
South Tees	408	260	301	167	0	5	9	211	201	46	131	295

Numbers using the Humber appear to be stable; apart from the WeBS counts, Spurn recorded a maximum of 1883 on 19th October. Along the coast best counts were: 67 at Whitby on 5th January; 250 at Scalby Lodge Pond on 2nd January; wintering numbers at Filey were down this year, with maxima of 52 on 27th January and 40 at the year end; Flamborough’s best were just 18 on 12th January and 14 on 19th October.

The only visible passage during spring related to nine flying out east at Spurn on 27th May. In the autumn, southerly passage was recorded along the coast; the largest numbers were logged at Filey, where a total of 514 included peaks of 165 on 6th July and 77 on 26th August. At Spurn 480 flew south and 152 came in off the sea between 26th June and 18th October, including high counts of 40 on 6th, 61 on 11th, 72 on 16th and 49 on 30th July. Long Nab’s best counts were 38 south on 6th July and 19 the next day. Flamborough produced 17 south on 19th July and 85 on 2nd August.

Blacktoft Sands held the largest numbers in early autumn, with 233 on 18th August and 158 on 2nd September. Most inland sites recorded their maxima between January and April, with smaller numbers in the autumn and

second winter period. The biggest concentrations included 100 at Pulfin Bog on 13th January and 4th March and 75 there on 15th November, 74 at North Cave on 26th January, 65 at Swine Moor on 28th March, 36 at Old Moor on 27th April, 30 at Skelton Lake at either end of the year, and 32 at Nosterfield NR in early April.

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority estimated a breeding population of 1000 pairs (which is a nationally important number). However, only six pairs were located in the Yorkshire section of the Peak District; other upland breeding records came from Ilkley Moor, Kex Gill Moor and John O’ Gaunts Res. Breeding reports from lowland sites included: Fairburn Ings (four pairs); Blacktoft Sands (nine pairs, although possibly none successful); Old Moor area (ten broods rearing 24 young); Edderthorpe Flash (three pairs); Potteric Carr (two pairs); Swillington Ings (two pairs); Wilthorpe Marsh, and Nosterfield NR (ten pairs, with a good success rate of between one–three fledged young per pair).

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres* **A**
Amber list: uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce inland
WeBS Status – Int. threshold 1500: GB threshold 500

Birds breeding in northeast Canada, Greenland and Fennoscandia winter on rocky or coarse sand coasts, and sections of estuary with fucoid covered cobbles from the North Sea south to West Africa, although they can roost in dockland areas.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
North Humber	29	16	26	38	36	25	30	0	66	71	32	7
South Tees	163	48	247	156	43	84	26	37	37	54	163	110

Counts on the south side of the Tees Estuary were the best since 2000 and again represented the largest numbers seen along the Yorkshire coast. On the Humber numbers remained low and Spurn’s maximum was 77 on 12th August, although 28 visited Patrington Haven on 22nd April. At Whitby counts were low, with a high of 35 on 24th December. Scarborough held 35 on 12th January, but good numbers were present during spring and included 51 on 23rd March and 63 on 9th April. The only significant count during the second half was 63 on 20th August. Ever present at Filey throughout the year, although there were usually less than 30 present, with a best of 40 on 28th April. Flamborough’s best were 70 on 4th October and 132 on 18th November.

Coastal passage was light; 11 flew south at Long Nab on 18th August, 41 flew south at Filey on 31st July and 310 flew south at Spurn between 6th July and 10th November, the bulk of which passed in late July and early August and included 112 on 29th, 30 on 30th July and 33 on 1st August.

Unusually one wintered at Nosterfield NR throughout January until 9th February, it then moved to Flasks Lake where it remained until 9th March. A single remained at Fairburn Ings for several days in mid–February, with one west there on 10th April. Singles were at Lingham Lake on 24th and 27th April and again on 4th May, with three present on 9th May. Other May records included singles at: Blackmoorfoot Res on 4th, Thornton Moor Res on 5th, Nosterfield NR on 10th and 30th, Flasks Lake on 21st, Potteric Carr on 8th–9th, 15th–16th, and 20th–21st. One was at Winterset from 9th–11th May, with two present on 17th, one visited Old Moor on 14th May, followed by two on 15th, with another at nearby Broomhill Flash. Two were at Ripon City Quarry on 16th May and Hatfield Moors hosted a single on 24th May, with three more on 28th. Four were at Gouthwaite Res on 28th May and two dropped in at Warley Moor Res on 30th May. One flew east at Fairburn Ings on 13th June and the last of spring remained at Pugney’s CP from 22nd–24th June.

Autumn passage started with one at Orgreave Lagoons on 20th July, a single at Winterset from 25th–30th July, four at Southfield Res on 25th July, followed by singles at Old Moor and Nosterfield NR on 26th July. A lone individual visited Potteric Carr on 3rd August, three were on Hatfield Moors on 8th, with six there on 17th, and a single dropped in at Flasks Lake on 30th August. Significant passage occurred on 6th September: nine were on Hatfield Moors, seven were on Broomhill Flash, four at Southfield Res and one at Lingham Lake. Singles then flew over Blackmoorfoot Res on 12th September and were present at Winterset Res on 1st and 5th October.

WILSON’S PHALAROPE *Phalaropus tricolour* **A**
Vagrant; 14 previous records

Breeds in the interior of western Canada south to California and throughout mid–west states of USA; also South Ontario. Most migrate through interior USA and winter in South America from Peru south to Argentina and Chile.

A presumed adult visited Blacktoft Sands on 17th/18th September (MJP *et al.*), it spent most of its time from 16th–21st September on the east side of the Trent at Alkborough Flats, North Lincolnshire. This is the second year in succession that the species has appeared in the county, but only the third record this decade.

GREY PHALAROPE *Phalaropus fulicarius* **A**
Rare or scarce coastal passage migrant and winter visitor; rare inland

This species has a noticeably different distribution to the preceding one, breeding in North America east through Iceland, Spitzbergen and Novaya Zembla, but not in northern Eurasia. It is most likely to occur in our county after westerly or north–westerly gales, though rarely does more than one occur at same time.

After last year’s glut, it was back to an average year with ten records. The sole record in the first winter period related to one feeding offshore from Marine Drive at Scarborough on 6th January, found during the annual Mike Clegg Memorial Bird Race (GW *et al.*).

The first of the autumn was at Altofts near Normanton on 4th/5th September, swiftly followed by one feeding on the Humber mud at Spurn on 8th September (NG). A single discovered sitting on the sea off Flamborough Head on 5th October preceded another briefly on the Canal at Spurn which later flew west up river on 11th October (TMc). There was a small flurry of records at the end of October associated with a switch to strong northerly winds: Easington Lagoon hosted a single on 28th (JDH), one landed on the sea off Long Nab, Scarborough before flying off north the following day (NWA), with subsequent singles at South Gare on 30th (JBD *et al.*) and Saltburn on 31st October (MBr). The same day produced four tracking past Filey Brigg (JHo). The year’s last record was at Nosterfield NR on 7th November (PJC).

POMARINE SKUA *Stercorarius pomarinus* **A**
Uncommon coastal passage migrant; more numerous in autumn; rare inland

Breeds in circumpolar subarctic regions, migrating south, sometimes overland, to winter in the southern oceans. Undoubtedly a legacy of the 2007 late autumn influx, several remained in the North Sea early on. Spurn logged a duo on 2nd January, with a further two bird/days at Flamborough during the month and an immature off Filey Brigg on 6th January. A first–year north at Spurn on 3rd February constituted the winter’s last.

Late spring/early summer yielded a single at Flamborough in May and two there in June. Although activity increased from July, autumn passage was below average with a mere 50 bird/days recorded at Flamborough, although Spurn managed a more creditable 91 bird/days. An immature headed north off Marine Drive on 6th July, while July’s maximum count was three at Flamborough on 19th. Numbers remained low during August, with best counts of five at Flamborough and four off Spurn on 29th. Early September produced a flurry of records, with several sites recording their annual maxima on 6th: four headed south off South Gare, six flew south at Cowbar, four were logged south at Filey and nine were off Flamborough. After a lull, numbers increased again at the end of September, with five south at Spurn on 29th September followed by three at Flamborough on 1st October, three south at Long Nab the following day and an impressive 36 south at Spurn on 3rd October, most of which were adults. Two were off Barmston on 30th October, while November’s records were confined to a single at Spurn on 5th and two at Flamborough on 25th.

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus* **A**
Red list and UK BAP species: fairly common coastal passage migrant; more numerous in autumn; rare inland

Breeds in northern Scotland and widely around the Arctic and subarctic, migrating along the Yorkshire coast and wintering at sea usually in the southern hemisphere, but some linger further north. In spring most activity focused on Spurn, presumably involving migrants leaving the Humber after an overland passage. Sixteen were logged heading east between two on 21st April and the last on 18th May, with no more than three on any day. Subsequently birds tracking the coast included singles at Filey and Long Nab on 18th May, when five headed past Flamborough, and lone individuals again off Spurn on 25th and 26th May. Low single figures were recorded throughout June, with a best of 11 off Flamborough on 28th, while autumn passage picked up from mid July. However numbers were again disappointing, with only 296 bird/days recorded at Filey, the second lowest tally there over the last 30 years and a paltry 563 bird/days logged at Flamborough. Passage was especially disappointing during August with best counts of: 22 off Flamborough on 13th, 29 at Spurn on 17th and finally 40 off Spurn on 31st August. September brought some improvement with the autumn’s biggest movement occurring on 6th with 86 south off Scarborough, 108 logged off Filey, 129 off Flamborough and 142 at Spurn. Few were left in the North Sea by November, with the last two at Flamborough on 16th.

A dark phase adult flew north–east over Rother Valley CP on 15th June, while less unusual was one at Patrington Haven on 15th August.

Arctic Skua ●
Ray Scally

LONG-TAILED SKUA *Stercorarius longicaudus* A

55.103.34.54.35

Scarce coastal migrant mainly in autumn; rare inland

This circumpolar species is the scarcest of the skuas occurring in the county. Increased observer awareness led to more records in the 1990s, but recent years have been relatively poor. Numbers depend on the Lemming cycle and appropriate weather conditions.

The first headed over Spurn before eventually flying south past the sea-watching hut on 26th April. The next records related to an adult north at Filey on 15th June and one off Flamborough on 9th July.

Although activity increased during August, the autumn was disappointing, as illustrated by a mere ten bird/days recorded at Flamborough. Spurn logged singles on 10th August, two flew south on 15th August, and one flew north there on 16th. Singles then tracked past Long Nab on 18th August, Flamborough on 23rd, Spurn on 25th, Flamborough the following day and finally, an adult headed south past Withernsea on 29th August. Numbers picked up during September with six juveniles at South Gare on 6th, which included a party of four that circled the mouth of the Tees before rising and drifting off south-west; two singles headed south at Spurn on the same date. An adult flew south past Holmpton on 7th September, with singles off Flamborough on 7th, 12th and 13th September, with another south at Skinningrove also on 13th, followed by a juvenile south at Spurn on 14th. A subsequent lull was broken by singles south at Flamborough and Spurn on 23rd September, with the month's last off Flamborough on 28th. The first few days of October proved productive, with a single south at Spurn on the opening day, followed by another south at Filey the next day, two juveniles south at Long Nab on 3rd and one off Flamborough on 4th October. A late juvenile that flew south at Filey on 16th November drew the year to a close.

GREAT SKUA *Catharacta skua* A

Amber list: fairly common to uncommon coastal passage migrant; rare inland

Breeds in Scotland, Iceland, the Faeroes and recently Scandinavia, migrating usually offshore to the seas off southern Europe.

The only early record related to two heading north off Filey on 3rd January, while April witnessed singles off Flamborough on 25th and Spurn two days later. A single south over Spurn on 17th May preceded another off Flamborough on 31st May. Low single figures were logged sporadically at coastal watch-points during July/August, but September brought a dramatic improvement. Southbound passage peaked on 6th September with: 44 past Cowbar, 40 at Scarborough, 183 at Filey, 212 similarly at Flamborough and 65 logged at Spurn. Another pulse moved south during the latter half of September, with 106 off Filey on 22nd followed next day by 47 at Flamborough and 112 at Spurn; the latter constituting a new site record. Unusually three flew south with a flock of Pink-footed Geese over Skelton on 28th September. Numbers reduced substantially in October, with bests of 18 off Long Nab and 23 at Flamborough on 3rd October. After a few remained during November, the last were off Spurn on 14th and 27th December. For the first time ever, Flamborough's autumn tally of 598 Bonxies heading south outnumbered the equivalent 563 Arctic Skuas.

SABINE'S GULL *Larus sabini* A

22.11.5.56.16

Scarce autumn coastal migrant, very rare in winter

This species breeds from Greenland east to eastern Siberia and the western populations winter in the Atlantic. It typically occurs from late August to October, with numbers swelled by severe gales. Adults tend to move before juveniles.

A presumed first-summer tracked north past Long Nab on 8th August (NWA: RNH: SW), while further north a juvenile flew south off Skinningrove on 13th September (ECP). Two juveniles headed north past Marine Drive on 22nd September (SW), with Filey's only record consisting of a juvenile south on 5th October (JHo). Flamborough fared little better and after a record-breaking 2007, records were confined to two dates. An adult flew north on 6th September (AMA: AMa: PC: BR *et al.*) and two juveniles moved north on 5th October (PC: IM: BR *et al.*). Further south, singles flew south at Grimston on 4th and 30th August (TI). Spurn proved to be the favoured location, with seven birds between early August and mid-September. An adult headed south on 4th August (RJS *et al.*), with a first-summer south on 12th August (AG: AAH) and a juvenile similarly on 19th (AAH). An adult flew south on 26th August, with presumably the same also south on 29th, 30th and 31st August (PCo: BRS *et al.*). In addition, a second-summer headed south off Spurn on 28th August (ICW: SWH) and the month ended with a juvenile south on 31st (RJS). September's sole records related to a single south off Hornsea on 4th (NH), an adult at Beacon Ponds on 15th (CT), with presumably the same then north past the Lighthouse the next day (RSm).

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla* A

Amber list: common coastal breeder and passage migrant; scarce inland

Breeds along the coasts of northern Europe and the Arctic.

Despite the dramatic decline in breeding numbers during the 1990's Bempton Cliffs and Flamborough Head continue to support the largest Kittiwake colony in the UK.

In the north of the county there were 1930 pairs on Hunt Cliff and 1910 pairs between Boulby and Cowbar. This was the worst total for several years, even though it followed a relatively healthy year in 2007. Conversely there were 1627 occupied nests below Scarborough Castle on 25th April, up on a tally of 1393 nests the previous year. Additionally there were 100+ nests at Hundale and 140 on the Grand Hotel, together with small numbers on other seafront buildings. Anecdotally, the number of juveniles present in mid-July indicated a successful breeding season. Furthermore, the cliffs at Bempton and Flamborough Head continue to support the largest colony in the UK. Despite a 13% decline since the Millennium, 37,617 pairs raised an average of 0.83 young per pair. This represents relatively high breeding success compared to many other parts of the UK, where populations are under threat.

Scarborough's largest movement occurred on 1st November, when 1310 tracked north off Marine Drive. Very few were left from mid-month and the sole December record related to a single at Scalby Mills on 14th December. The species was similarly scarce off Filey during the winter period, with the first appreciable movement resulting in 160 south on 10th March. Records were received from only eight days in January/February at Spurn, with a best of 22 on 26th February. Thereafter it was recorded only spasmodically, with seven counts in treble figures, including: 220 on 1st July; 1230 on 30th October and 246 on 24th November.

Inland, Rivelin Dams hosted the first on 27th January, with an appreciable increase in records during March. Singles appeared at Whiteholme, Calderdale on 14th March, at Winterset on 16th, Thrybergh CP on 19th, Eccup Res the next day and Rother Valley CP on 21st/23rd March. Two single adults then flew through Swillington Ings early on March 23rd, with another duo at Edderthorpe Flash on 25th, followed by a single lingering on Southfield Res on 25th/26th March. April yielded singles on Huxter Well, Potteric on 3rd, followed by one at Winterset on 12th April. An adult flew south over Cononley Ings on 2nd May, with singles of similar age at Fly Flats and Swillington the following day and at Elland Gravel Pits on 4th May. One tracked south-east over Swillington on 10th May, with another at Southfield Res the same day. June's sole inland records related to a single east at Southfield Res on 9th followed by another west the next day. Unusually an adult appeared at Swillington Ings on July 15th, only the third such summer record there. August witnessed a single west through Blacktoft Sands on 22nd with a gap in further records until 2nd November, when singles appeared at both Nosterfield NR and Rother Valley CP.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* A

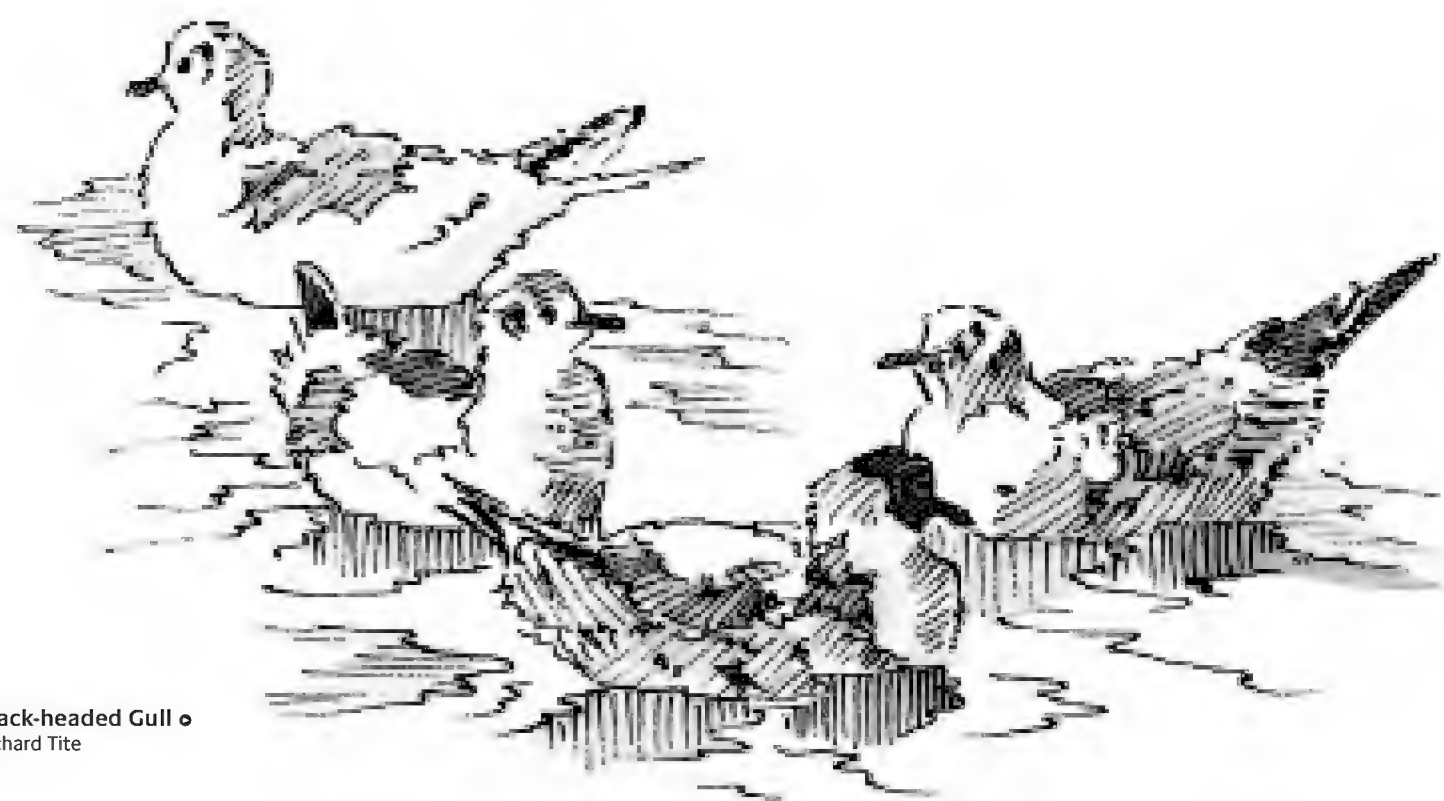
Amber list: common breeder and abundant in winter. BBS 56/204

A widespread and successful species, breeding from east Canada east through Britain and Europe to north-east China. As many as 1.9 million are thought to winter in Britain, with many immigrants from northern Europe and perhaps western Russia reaching Yorkshire.

The roost at Wheldrake Ings attracted 4500 on 25th February, 12,000 roosted at Tophill Low the next day and Southfield Res held over 3000 on 4th August, but the highest counts came from sites further inland. The roost at Eccup Res attracted 16,000 daily during January and February, with a reduction to 10,000 in March as adults dispersed to breeding colonies. By September the roost had increased back up to 8000, with a peak of 17,000 in December. At Winterset a co-ordinated count revealed a conservative 20,000 in the roost on January 13th. Numbers were lower at the year end, with 1000 present on 16th September increasing to a peak of 7,000 on October 25th. Only 4,000 were estimated to be roosting on December 27th. In the north of the county large numbers attended the Lingham Lake roost, with the following monthly maxima: 15,000 on 12th January; 30,000 on 10th February; 28,000 on 9th March and 5000 on 25th October.

Bred at Margrove Ponds and, presumably, Stanghow Moor, where 79 were present on 3rd May and agitated behaviour was noted on 1st July. Three pairs bred at Tophill Low, North Cave hosted a breeding colony of 120 pairs, while there were 170 breeding pairs at Blacktoft Sands. Two discrete colonies were present on Thorne Moors, with 300+ adults present at one site on 8th June and 250+ at the other on 30th March. The colony again increased at Potteric, where there were an estimated 200 to 250 pairs. Although large numbers of young fledged, a vixen swam across to the island colony and took chicks in early June. A total of 66 pairs bred on the islands and rafts at Winterset, raising at least 84 young and 30 pairs nested at Pugney's GP although success was poor. Over 800 nests were counted at Swillington Ings in early summer, although an estimated 25% more were considered to have been hidden from view. The total of 1000 nests was therefore similar to 2007, and nesting success, although again disappointing, was less so than the previous year. Further north, several thousand adults were present in the colony at Upper Barden Res, although a long-term observer suggested numbers were much reduced. In addition, there was a small colony of 200 less than a mile to the east. The colony at Lingham Lake had 267 nests on 20th April and Nosterfield NR held three nesting pairs.

Southbound passage was witnessed along the coast in spring and more especially the autumn, including 1160 south at Filey on 21st September and 1209 off Flamborough on 28th September. At Spurn a minimum of 2086 were logged heading south and 248 east; passage was most obvious from late March to early May, with high counts of 182 on 9th March, 257 on 30th March and 221 on 1st April. A total of 3351 headed south in the autumn, with maxima of 271 on 26th August, 550 on 22nd October and 1008 on 27th October.



Black-headed Gull •
Richard Tite

LITTLE GULL *Hydrocoloeus minutus* A

Amber list: uncommon to fairly common passage migrant; scarce inland

Breeds across Eurasia with birds dispersing in late July, entering the North Sea via the Baltic, and generally wintering south of England.

The first record from the north of the county related to one at Marske on 4th March. An adult and first-summer were present at Scaling Dam on 1st May; the latter bird still present the following day. In summer, Bran Sands Saline Lagoon attracted seven on 15th June, whilst nine tracked north past South Gare on 7th September and a single was off Saltburn on 30th October.

New Year's Day witnessed an adult on Scalby Lodge Pond, followed by a first-winter at Scalby Mills on 4th January and an adult south at Marine Drive on 6th January. After an adult in Jackson's Bay on 8th February, two were present in late March, with a single on Scalby Lodge Pond on 2nd April. A first-summer remained on Scalby Lodge Pond on 30th June–1st July. Further July records concerned two adults south at Marine Drive on 6th and a first-summer at Scalby Mills on 29th. Autumn was very disappointing with three off Long Nab on 8th August and five there on 18th the month's sole records. September's only double figure counts related to 12 at Long Nab on 3rd and 20 there three days later. Two records in October, with an adult in a ploughed field east of Scalby Manor on 25th and a first-winter at Scalby Mills on 29th, while Scarborough's last were four adults north off Marine Drive on 1st November.

Filey's first was off the Brigg on 3rd January, with two present two days later. Filey Dams attracted singles on 24th April and again on 7th/8th May. The first sign of a late summer influx related to 23 south off the Brigg on 6th July, and a further 27 bird/days were logged during the month. August was very poor, with a mere 10 bird/days, although September showed a big improvement. Filey Bay attracted a roost of 169 on 4th September and the next day 262 went south, followed by 82 on 6th. Thereafter, numbers were much reduced with seven bird/days in October, including Filey's last on 25th. In keeping with other coastal sites, Flamborough experienced a very disappointing year; beginning with 21 on 7th January, a single the next day and then a gap until singles on 4th and 18th May and three on 27th May. A total of 1423 bird/days between 9th July and 26th October, with monthly maxima of 304 on 9th July, 29 on 16th August, 190 on 6th September and 255 on 4th October.

The Holderness coast again featured substantial numbers in late summer, including 200 between Atwick and Ulrome on 5th/6th July. Hornsea Mere attracted two first-summers on 27th April and another on 4th May, with the usual build-up taking place from July. Over 300 were present on 25th July, 1147 were present on 14th August and 1253 were logged on Hornsea Mere on 4th September.

An adult north at Spurn on 10th March was the first to enter the log, with another similarly north on 5th April. Two flew south on 12th and one was present on 28th April. Singles were seen on 7th and 9th May, with two on 14th. No more than five were recorded on four dates during June, but July saw records on most days, including counts of 150 on 10th, 300 on 12th and 120 on 20th. Autumn lacked substantial numbers, with a high of just 22 on 31st August. Small numbers were logged on five dates during October, with a best of 17 on 3rd and on three dates in November, with a peak of seven on 2nd. Spurn's last related to a single on 16th December.

Inland, Puffin experienced a good year which began with two on May 29th and then four on June 2nd. July proved to be the best month with singles on 15th, 21st and 26th, followed by up to eight from 28th–31st July. A party of 12 was present on 9th August, with four on 12th and singles on 17th, 20th and 23rd August. Nearby, Tophill Low hosted singles on 12th/13th April with another from 6th–8th May. Sightings at Tophill were more regular from late summer, when 65 were present from 25th–29th August and 120 were present on 6th September. Large numbers also fed over fields adjacent to Leven during the latter half of August, including 370 on 21st.

Along the Humber, four adults were at Patrington Haven on 27th July, with an adult still present the following day. Another adult appeared on 31st August and eight juveniles dropped in on 13th September. Paull Holme Strays hosted two first-summers from 2nd June, with three present on 30th. Records became more regular in July, with up to three featuring regularly. Numbers increased to nine by 8th August before dropping back; only a single adult remained on 15th September.

The Welton Waters/Brough Airfield complex attracted small numbers in spring, following a second-summer on 3rd April. Two adults were on the Sailing Pit on 21st April, with eight present on 30th April (including six first-summers), nine present on 1st May (one adult and seven first-summers) increasing to 11 the following day (five adults and six first-summers). Several were present at Welton from 6th–9th May, with a best of 14 on the former date.

North Cave's first related to an immature on 23rd April, with possibly the same on 28th. Three first-summers appeared on 31st May, whilst there was a series of first-summers during June, with a single on 1st/2nd, two on 3rd and one on 4th, 6th and 7th. North Cave's last record related to a single on 11th July.

The first at Blacktoft Sands was a party of six on 23rd April, with activity peaking during May. Three present on 2nd/3rd May were joined by an additional individual on 4th. A flock of eight on 15th May constituted the site's yearly maximum, with a duo on 23rd and six on 30th May. Blacktoft's final record consisted of three on 24th June. Southfield Res recorded two adults west on 23rd July followed by two juveniles present on 30th August; two adults and a juvenile then headed west on 15th September. An immature visited Hatfield Moors on 29th April. Unusually, a single toured Sheffield in the early part of the year, after first appearing at Ulley Res on 4th January. Subsequent records came from Morehall Res and Damflask Res, but more especially Broomhead Res, with the last sighting there on 10th February. A single also appeared at Treeton Dyke on 28th March.

Pugney’s GP attracted three on 25th April, six were present on 5th May, with a single there on 8th May; in autumn, a lone individual made a brief visit on 1st October. An adult appeared in the roost at Winterset on 5th January, followed by four first–summers on 5th May. In the latter half of the year, Winterset recorded two adults and a first–winter on 15th September, a first–winter on 1st October and finally three adults on 2nd November. A single over Swillington Ings on 5th January was possibly the same as the Winterset individual; it re–appeared at Swillington two days later. An adult flew east over Swillington Ings on 25th April, with an adult and first–summer over Waterloo Lake, Roundhay Park on 8th June.

In the north of the county, an adult roosted at Flasks Lake on 24th March, with one of similar age through Staveley NR on 23rd April; two adults were at Farnham GP on 13th July and another was at Nosterfield NR on 19th July.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus* **A**

Amber list: scarce visitor in all seasons; has attempted to breed

Breeding mainly in south–east and southern Europe, there has been an expansion north–west in recent years and numbers recorded in the county continue to increase.

At least 21 different individuals (12 adults, five second–years, four first–years) were recorded in the Yorkshire part of Cleveland, which included the wintering adult at Saltburn *in situ* to at least 18th March and again from 23rd October through to the year end. Four roosted on Scaling Dam on 21st March.

Further south the Holbeck Car Park at Scarborough continued to provide great views, particularly around the car park over high tides. Five were present through much of January and February, consisting of three adults and two second–winters. An additional adult appeared on 24th February and all six remained to at least 6th March. After a spring departure, two adults and a first–summer had returned by 4th July and numbers increased to six (four adults, a second–winter & a first–winter) by 26th October, with an additional first–winter present on 7th December. An estimated nine different individuals were recorded at Filey, with up to three present in the Bay during October. At Flamborough no more than 11 were logged during the year, with three first–winters north on 22nd September the best daily total. It was only absent in the Spurn area in January and December and numbers peaked during late summer, with a best of six at Easington on 15th August.

On the Humber three adults and a second–summer were present at Patrington Haven on 28th July and numbers increased further there during August, to a peak of nine on 11th.

An adult at Swillington Ings on 23rd March was joined in the gull colony by a second adult on 23rd April. Evidence of successful breeding was obtained on 12th July, when a well–grown juvenile was observed harassing one of the adults for food. However, there was no evidence that the young fledged, and the adults departed a week later.

A pair of second–summers lingered at North Cave from 18th April to 7th May and two summer–plumaged adults were at Winterset on 27th/29th June. An adult that flew east along Went Ings, Southfield on 22nd June constituted the first site record for that month.

An adult at Old Moor on 1st and 3rd July had been ringed in Wloclawek, Poland in at least its fourth calendar–year on 20th May 2003; subsequently it was noted at Westdorpe, The Netherlands during May 2006 and in Gwynedd, Wales in October 2006 and again in September 2007.

An apparent Black–headed x Mediterranean Gull hybrid was present at Patrington Haven on 11th August.

COMMON GULL *Larus canus* **A**

Amber list: common to abundant passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS 18/204

Breeds in Scotland, and only common in Yorkshire outside the breeding season when continental migrants from Scandinavia and the Baltic states arrive from September through to December to winter. European breeding populations have been declining.

The roost at Eccup Res held 5000 during January and February, but numbers dropped thereafter as birds headed to breeding grounds, leaving a March best of 4000. Numbers increased from September when 2000 were logged, and numbers increased month–on–month until the roost numbered 6000 by the year end. On 7th January a partial leucistic bird roosted at Eccup; it returned in autumn and roosted on 18th and 20th November. Tophill Low held the largest numbers with 22,000 in the roost on 16th February increasing to 25,000 by 26th February.

Counts elsewhere included 2500 in fields at Farnley on 25th January, otherwise the largest counts came from inland roosts. Waters in the east experienced their highest numbers in late summer, with 1000 roosting on Wykeham Lakes on 20th July. Southfield Res then hosted an unprecedented roost of 4000 on 28th August, at a time of year when double–figure counts are the norm for the site. The only other significant count from



Mediterranean Gull ◉
Ray Scally

Southfield related to 1500 roosting on 26th November. Although there were no co–ordinated counts from Winterset, there were estimates of at least 1000 roosting on 13th January, 3rd February and 8th November, with Blackmoorfoot Res attracting 1600 on 6th January and 1200 in the roost on 8th February. In the Harrogate area, Lingham Lake held 1200 on 12th January, increasing to 2500 on 10th February. March witnessed a northward passage and numbers were boosted at Lingham with 8000 on 9th March, falling back to 1000 by 24th March.

Numbers increased dramatically at Flamborough in September, with a best of 1877 on 28th September, following an August high of just 11 on 28th. Passage at Spurn in the first half of the year totalled 213 south and 196 east, including highs of 112 east on 30th March and 100 south on 3rd May. There was very little obvious southerly passage in the second half of the year, with a best of just 110 on 27th October.

On 19th June, one unluckily landed near a Coot with newly hatched young on Canal Scrape, Spurn and was subsequently drowned by one of the adults.

LESSER BLACK–BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus* **A**

Amber list: scarce breeding summer visitor; fairly common passage migrant/increasing winter visitor BBS 29/204

The form *graellsii* occasionally breeds in Yorkshire at inland sites and on coastal rooftops in Scarborough, Filey and Bridlington. This race also breeds in Western Europe, Greenland, Iceland and the Faeroes as well as northern Britain, and migrates through the county to winter to the south, usually returning in March. The race *intermedius* breeds in Denmark, southern Norway and Sweden and occurs in small numbers on passage.

Although continuing to breed on the moors within Upper Wharfedale, it is thought to be in decline as a result of control measures implemented by gamekeepers. Along the coast, two adults frequented Scarborough Town centre rooftops in mid– June, although breeding was not proven. However, in Filey two pairs bred successfully in the town and further south another pair bred at Hornsea Mere.

Inland sites experienced their usual mid–summer/early autumn influx. Numbers increased at Nosterfield Quarry from 140 on 6th June to 500 by mid–month and 978 were present on 28th June. Many of these birds were immatures and some subspecies *L.f. intermedius* were present amongst the British *L.f. graellsii*. Numbers rose further during the autumn with 2500 on 24th August, 4000 on 24th September, 4200 on 12th October, then dropping back to 500 by 25th October. Elsewhere, Scargill Reservoir attracted 400 on 3rd and 9th July. At Staveley NR 2000 flew south–west late on 11th September and there was a similar movement north early on 1st October. Cononley Ings pulled in 249 on 13th July, whilst Thornton Moor Res attracted 810 in late July.

Further south, 280 roosted on the Scout Dike/Royd Moor Res complex on 27th July, with numbers increasing to 430 on 10th August, 600 on 17th before reducing to 470 on 4th September and 266 on 12th October. Fairburn’s maximum comprised of 450 on 21st September, while at Winterset the roost held 440 on 25th October. Orgreave NR attracted sizeable numbers during late summer, with 320 on 20th July increasing to 698 on 17th August. Numbers roosting at Redmires Res peaked at 700 on 13th September, with 515 on 29th September and 450 still present on 24th October. Record site numbers gathered at Potteric Carr between July and November,

including: 390 on 2nd July, 495 on 10th and 610 on 19th July. Further large counts were 185 on 3rd August, 245 on 26th October, 600 on 10th November, 480 on 14th and 300 on 21st November. A colour–ringed bird on 17th November had been rung as a nestling at Orford Ness, Suffolk.

In the east, the Wykeham Lakes roost peaked in the latter half of July: 60 present on 17th increased to 600 on 20th, with 300 roosting on 28th July. Passage at Flamborough was confined to spring and autumn, with most activity in the former period, especially in May. Fifteen passed the headland on 29th April, with a best of 29 on 31st May; eleven were logged on both 21st and 28th September. Reflecting a pattern repeated along the coast, it was recorded almost daily at Spurn from mid–March until mid–October, although mostly in single figures. However, 43 flew south on 20th April, as did 24 on 3rd May. The year’s largest gathering was 90 on the Humber on 17th August. In total, 279 flew south and 58 north between 20th January and 6th June, while 111 tracked south between July and early November, including the autumn’s only double–figure count of 24 on 13th September.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus* **A**
Red list and UK BAP subspecies (*argenteus*)

Fairly common resident breeder; common passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS 24/204

The race *argenteus* breeds in Britain and Ireland, including the Yorkshire coast from where it disperses mostly locally. Distribution in BBS squares represents mostly dispersed non–breeders.

Approximately 500 pairs nested on cliffs between Saltburn and Cowbar, an increase which contrasts with the national picture, where declines have resulted in the species being red–listed. A census of the cliffs at Bempton/Flamborough located 533 pairs; more in keeping with the nationwide picture, as 709 pairs were present in 2000 and 1246 present in 1969.

Numbers peaked at 177 on 3rd February in the Lingham Lake roost, with 200 west over Farnham GP on 30th March. Swillington Ings continued to attract significant roosts of large gulls and 5000 sought overnight refuge there at either end of the year. In line with most inland sites, numbers were greatly reduced at Winterset, where the peak count during the early part of the year was 230 on January 13th, though on many evenings there were just double figures present. Numbers again increased during November with 40 on 23rd, rising to a peak of 250 on 14th December. In the Sheffield area 200 were present at Orgreave NR on 19th January, but Broomhead Res proved to be the most productive water in Sheffield during the course of the year. The roost held 279 on 20th January, rising to 370 on 6th February, while it pulled in 300 on 6th December and 454 were present on 17th December. Southfield Res roost counts included 1200 on 4th and 1350 on 28th January. In November 500 were present on 27th and at least 2500 roosted on 5th December. A total of 1500 roosted at Wheldrake Ings on 25th February.

Near the coast the roost at Wykeham Lakes held 600 on 17th July and 2200 on 27th December. Seamer Tip attracted a feeding frenzy of 5000 on 30th December. At Filey 620 were on the beach on 6th January, while 470 tracked north in one hour on 22nd January. Impressive numbers continued to be recorded during March, with 1080 roosting in the Bay on 21st March. Records relating to the northern *argentatus* race are considered to be in decline at Flamborough, where the daily maxima were 16 on 5th January and 17 on 1st December.

Southerly passage at Spurn between January and April recorded 7404 south, including 2000 on 26th January; 633 on 1st, 740 on 22nd March; 403 on 2nd and 564 on 20th April. Autumn passage mirrored spring, with a total of 7659 south between 7th September and the year end, including daily maxima of 842 on 26th October, 2115 on 27th, 430 on 29th October; 500 on 2nd and 710 on 22nd November.

A probable Herring x Glaucous Gull hybrid was at Swillington Ings on 21st January, while the same site hosted a large, dark–mantled bird with yellow legs, which otherwise appeared to be a typical Herring Gull on 8th November. A leucistic second–year type was present at Wilsthorpe, Bridlington on 29th May.

YELLOW–LEGGED GULL *Larus michahellis* **A**
Amber list: uncommon summer visitor and migrant

Breeds in southern Europe. Numbers reported from the county seem to have stabilized in recent years now that observers are familiar with its identification, but more are being reported from the north of the county.

Reports are scarcer along the eastern fringe of the county, especially north of the Holderness coast. However, the usual adult remained at the Tees Barrage from 2007 until 22nd February and visited the south bank on a daily basis. It returned on 18th July and was resident to the year end. A second–summer moulting into third–winter plumage visited Scaling Dam on 26th August, while further south a first–summer appeared at Scalby Lodge Pond on 22nd May. The Wykeham Lakes roost near Scarborough attracted an adult on 17th July, followed by another two adults on 20th August. Filey produced three records: a third–summer on 30th April, an adult on 14th July and a second–summer south on 30th July. Flamborough’s first related to an adult on 30th March, but then there were

no further sightings until late summer/early autumn, starting with an adult on 19th July. Juveniles were logged on 4th and 23rd August, while a first–summer lingered on 6th October. Spurn again proved to be the most productive coastal location, commencing with an adult on 8th March. The next was on the Humber on 26th May followed by three second–summers birds on the Humber on 6th June. An adult on 11th June was the precursor to a more consistent presence, with two regularly until 7th July, after which the only other record related to a single on 16th August.

Sizeable inland waters often recorded singles during the late summer/autumn, with records in either winter period scarce. A first–winter was on Hornsea Mere on 13th January and adults were at Nosterfield NR on 26th January, Clifton Ings on 2nd February, Swillington on 8th, Pugney’s GP on 11th, Potteric Carr on 21st and Wheldrake Ings on 24th February. In addition, an adult and first–winter roosted at Swillington on 23rd February. An adult that visited Malham Tarn on 15th April constituted only the fourth site record.

Potteric Carr proved to be the most productive inland site, with up to two regularly present on Huxter Well from July to late autumn. However, higher numbers were recorded during mid–July, with 12 on 12th July and ten on 18th July. A single made sporadic appearances at Potteric during December. Along the Humber, Patrington Haven also attracted good numbers during late summer, with six on 1st August rising to eight from 11th–20th. Two adults remained on 12th September and there was an isolated record of an adult at Patrington on 20th December. Elsewhere six were on Hatfield Moors on 26th/27th July and a minimum of six different individuals visited Redmires Res from 2nd August through to 25th October, although no more than two were present on any single day. Winterset’s numbers peaked mid–autumn, with five (four adults and a third–winter) present on 27th September, while further north Swillington’s highest counts were earlier, with five present on 10th July.

CASPIAN GULL *Larus cachinnans* **A**
Rare visitor: 16 previous records

Caspian Gull breeds in the Caspian and Black Sea areas, but has recently expanded its breeding range to Poland. It is now regularly reported from south–east England, but in much smaller numbers than *michahellis*.

After a gap of several years, a long–stayer was welcomed when a third–winter visited Huxter Well, Potteric Carr on an almost daily basis from 12th November through to the year end (JCa *et al.*). This was the first twitchable record since the species was split; a second–winter at Nosterfield in early 2004 was the last to remain for any time in the county.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoides* **A**
Amber list: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

A winter visitor from Greenland.

A first–year remained in the Redcar area from 2nd February through to 29th March, with another at Hemlington Lake on 9th February. Finally, a first–winter appeared at Whinney Banks, Middlesbrough on 23rd November. To the south, Seamer Tip attracted an adult on 27th March. A juvenile took up temporary residence in Scarborough harbour from 7th–27th November and appeared once again on 9th December. A juvenile at Burton Riggs on 28th November was thought to be a different individual. A juvenile at Wykeham Lakes on 27th December left to the east. Filey hosted a juvenile sporadically from 27th January–11th February, while an adult flew north there on 25th March. There were three records of a juvenile at Filey from 2nd–14th November, with another present on 17th December. A juvenile rested on Flamborough Golf Course on 5th February, with a similarly aged bird near Old Fall on 15th February. Flamborough logged a juvenile south on 14th March, while the sole record from the second period related to a juvenile south on 19th November. An adult roosted on the beach north of Bridlington on 19th February, with a juvenile at the same location on 30th November. Further south a second–winter roosted on Hornsea Mere on 4th/5th March, with a third–winter present on 15th March. Spurn fared best amongst the coastal sites, starting with a juvenile south on 26th January. An adult south on 5th March preceded two similarly on 11th March. A juvenile headed south on 1st April followed by a probable adult on 16th and possibly the same on 25th April. In the second half of the year, an adult flew north on 21st September and south on 5th October and finally an adult headed north on 6th December.

It was noted regularly from the York area, with most records from gull roosts in the Lower Derwent Valley, although there were additional sightings from the centre of York and at Great Whin Tip, Rufforth. An adult at North Duffield Carrs on 15th February constituted the first and records of an adult and juvenile were regular through to 13th March, with an additional second–winter roosting at Wheldrake on 26th February.

Southfield Res began with a third–year on 22nd January. A third–year roosted on 28th January, while an adult roosting on 18th constituted the sole record during February. An adult again roosted on 19th/20th March, with presumably the same present on the morning of 26th and in the roost on 28th March. A first–year flying east on

20th April was the final record from the first half. A third-year roosted on Southfield Res on 26th November, followed by a juvenile in the roost on 17th/18th December.

In the Sheffield area a second-winter roosted on Broomhead Res on 20th and 30th December, whilst further north perhaps the same second-winter appeared at Old Moor on 14th December, with a juvenile over Old Moor and Broomhill on 26th December. Near Huddersfield, a juvenile appeared at Blackmoorfoot Res on 31st March, while the sole records from Halifax related to an adult heading SW near Green Withens on 2nd April and another adult west there on 22nd December. Fairburn recorded a juvenile on 17th and 24th November, while there was a good series of records from the Leeds area, concentrated in the Swillington Ings/Skelton Lake area. At Swillington Ings juveniles were present from 20th-22nd January, on 10th February and again on 12th March. In the final quarter one roosted on 30th November before being recorded either at Swillington, Skelton Lake or the nearby Tip on several dates through to 27th December. Second-years were present at Swillington on 20th January, 28th February, 15th March and 26th/27th March, with third-years recorded on 1st, 13th-24th and 30th March. An adult roosted at Swillington Ings on 3rd and 24th February and was then seen intermittently to 2nd March, and again on 24th and 30th March. An adult roosted at Eccup Res on 27th November, while a juvenile roosting at Lingham Lake on 10th February constituted the sole Harrogate record.

A third-winter Kumlien's Gull roosted on Broomhead Res on 26th January (A Deighton *et al.*), with the same re-appearing there on 3rd February, relocating to the Langsett Res roost on 6th (RS Boland) before returning to Broomhead Res for a final time on 9th February.

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus* **A**

Amber list: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

This species breeds in Iceland and on islands east to the Russian coast, and has in the past been more common than the smaller Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*, particularly on the coast, but recently this has not been the case.

Along the coast Scarborough's first related to a juvenile at Scalby Mills on 21st January, with another of similar age at Cayton Flash on 14th March, while a second-winter frequented Seamer Tip on 27th March.

In the second winter period, a juvenile rested on rocks at Cromer Point on 17th December and finally, Seamer Tip attracted a juvenile on 29th-30th December. At Filey a juvenile initially at Blue Dolphin relocated to the Brigg on 6th January, with a juvenile again on 22nd. A juvenile then took up temporary residence around the Country Park in early February remaining from 6th-16th. Filey Dams attracted a juvenile on 11th April, with presumably the same at Reighton on 24th and later over Carr Naze on 28th April. Filey's last related to a juvenile north on 30th November. Flamborough recorded a juvenile south on New Year's Day, while another lingered offshore on 1st February; perhaps the same then flew north over Old Fall on 10th February, while a juvenile at South Landing on 20th March constituted the last of the first period. A juvenile remained around the Outer Head at Flamborough from 22nd-27th November, while an adult tracked north there on 3rd December. A juvenile roosted on Hornsea Mere on 20th March, with possibly the same resting on the beach south of Bridlington harbour on 24th March. A juvenile flew south at Spurn on 16th March before another headed north on 11th April. In the autumn, a single flew south on 2nd November and presumably the same then flew back north two days later.

Along the upper reaches of the Humber estuary, Blacktoft Sands logged a single on 3rd February. To the immediate west, Southfield Res had an excellent run during the first three months. Single juveniles roosted on 5th and 15th January, before a regular presence through February, with a juvenile and second-winter present on 25th and 26th, followed by three juveniles in the roost on 27th/28th; a tally that equalled the site record. Up to three then continued to feature on a regular basis through to 20th March. Southfield's only records during the final quarter related to a juvenile on 18th December and a second-winter present on Boxing Day. A juvenile at Great Whin Tip, Rufforth on 31st January was the prelude to a series of sightings from the York area. As with the aforementioned species, most records came from the gull roosts in the Lower Derwent Valley, with up to three juveniles present from 16th February through to 13th March.

An adult and a first/second-year were present at Fairburn on 13th January, while nearby Swillington Ings provided all the Leeds area records. Two juveniles were present on 20th January, with one again on 21st and 31st. Two roosted at Swillington on 9th February and both were then noted sporadically through to the end of March, with a creditable four juveniles present in the roost on 24th March. A juvenile flew west at Swillington on 2nd November, only the third ever seen there in November. Single juveniles were present at Winterset on 6th January and 20th December and one of similar age headed west over Pugney's GP on 24th February.

Along the Pennines Blackmoorfoot Res recorded a juvenile on 1st March, with a third-winter at Whiteholme Reservoir on 14th March. A juvenile at Cullingworth from 8th-10th January constituted the first in the Bradford area for eight years. The Bar Lane Quarry gull roost held a first-year on 9th January and an adult on 23rd December; the first Harrogate records for three years.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus* **A**

Amber list: fairly common passage migrant, winter visitor and non-breeding resident. BBS 4/204

The British population breeds on northern and western coasts. Present throughout due to summering immatures and wintering adults, probably from Scandinavia.

Numbers continue to decline on inland waters, with 60 on 6th January easily the best count at Winterset, when numbers scarcely reached double figures on most evenings. Winterset's peak tallies at the year end were 22 on 23rd November, 40 on 26th December and 52 on 29th December. The maximum count at Broomhead Res was 72 on 17th December, with a best of 120 at Old Moor on 26th December. At Fairburn Ings counts increased from the end of September, with a high of 400 on 29th October. Sightings then fell steadily, with a best of only 36 in December. Wheldrake Ings attracted a roost of 550 on 25th February.

Along the coast the South Tees attracted numbers throughout the year, with an early high of 103 during January. Numbers picked up from August, with a best of 779 in September, most of which rested on Bran Sands. The only three-figure count in the Scarborough area early on related to 800 roosting at Wykeham Lakes on 4th January. Later in the year, 250 moved south past Long Nab on 11th September and 270 were at Scalby Mills on 19th October. Surprisingly, only 200 were counted at Seamer Tip on 31st December, far outnumbered by Herring Gulls. At Filey and Flamborough the highest counts related to mainly immatures 'loafing with intent' below the seabird colonies in mid-summer; 105 were around Filey Brigg on 1st June, while 487 were logged at Flamborough on 8th July. Present on a daily basis at Spurn, with the highest numbers recorded in late summer, with a best of 122 in August. Offshore passage at Spurn was only light: just 417 moved south in the first half, with highs of 90 on 16th and 67 on 22nd March. Only 237 were logged moving south between 21st August and 13th December, including a maximum of 45 on 27th October.

LITTLE TERN *Sterna albifrons* **A**

Amber list: scarce and localised breeding summer visitor and passage migrant

The nominate race breeding in Britain and Ireland winters off the coast of Africa.

South Gare recorded its first on 3rd May when three were present. Filey experienced an above average year, starting with two south on 24th June, followed by three on 26th July and two on 31st July. Finally, another duo headed south past the Brigg on 16th August. Unusually, Flamborough's maximum of five occurred on 18th May, but the only other record related to a single on 14th June.

Spurn's first flew over the Warren on 24th April. There were daily low double-figure counts until the end of July, with a best at Spurn itself of 44 on 27th May. After seven on 1st August, up to three were seen until the last on 31st August.

At Easington a total of 30 pairs disappointingly only reared one young to fledging, despite wardening and a flexi-net electric fencing being erected around the main nesting areas. The first Little Terns were seen on 26th April and three days later four birds were indulging in courtship flights and fish presentation. Strong north-east winds dispersed birds to Tetney on the south bank of the Humber on 24th May, but 15 individuals had returned two days later.

On 9th June, the first egg was in a scrape in front of Beacon Ponds hide and by mid-June 30 pairs were indulging in nest scraping. The first chick was located on 25th June; one of an eventual total of 20 chicks. Unfortunately, a Kestrel appeared in the colony in the second week of July and along with very heavy rain and strong south-westerly winds was undoubtedly responsible for the loss of chicks. Only one chick survived to fledging and the family party was at Chalk Bank on the high tide roost on 15th August.

Three pairs made scrapes at the Point on Spurn, however these were washed out by high tides in late May and there was no further attempt.

There were higher than average numbers inland, mainly as a result of a mini-influx at the end of April. Two visited Wombwell Ings and Broomhill Flash on 24th April and a duo appeared at Worsbrough Res on 27th April, while a single visited both Swine Moor and Tophill Low on the latter date. Southfield Res recorded no fewer than nine on 27th April, with a group of five and a single heading straight through north-east and three remaining on site. A single at Snaygill Ings on 28th April constituted the first record for the Cononley area and was quickly followed by a lone individual at Lingham Lake on 30th April. Singles dropped in at Fairburn Ings on 4th/5th and 23rd May and Pugney's GP hosted a single on 29th/30th May. Two were present at Blacktoft Sands on 11th June and a single headed east there on 1st July. Another dropped in at Farnham GP on 2nd September and the Humber attracted a group of six at Patrington Haven on 12th September. Finally a single dropped in at Tophill Low on 14th September.

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger* **A**
Amber list: uncommon passage migrant in varying numbers

The commonest of the marsh terns; it nests across Europe (not Britain) and winters in Africa.

The first was a very early single at Chelker Res on 6th April. A small influx then took place at the end of April, with singles at Southfield Res, Broomhill Flash and Ingbirchworth Res and four at Lingham Lake on 27th April. Broomhill Flash hosted another on 29th/30th April; on the latter date singles were also noted at Ingbirchworth Res, Scout Dike Res, Wintersetts and Lingham Lake and two flew east at Blacktoft Sands.

Most activity focused on the first two weeks of May, starting with a single at Swillington Ings on 3rd and duos at Ingbirchworth Res and Southfield Res (the latter staying to 4th). On 4th six were recorded at Spurn, Swillington Ings hosted three (with four present there the following day), Lingham Lake pulled in a flock of five (three remaining the next day) and twos were at Potteric Carr, Wheldrake Ings and Elsecar Res; singles also visited Hornsea Mere, Pugneys GP and Wykeham Lakes. Tophill Low recorded its first on 4th May with regular sightings there until 8th, with a best of 11 on the latter date. Four headed east over Spurn on 5th May, when there were four at Pugneys CP, two at Pulfin Bog and a single at Tophill Low (to 6th). Six headed east through Blackmoorfoot Res on 6th May, when a single dropped in at Otley Wetland and Spurn logged another three. In the Harrogate area, three arrived at Nosterfield Res on 6th and there were two at Staveley NR the same day. The 7th brought two to Worsbrough Res and seven dropped in at Southfield Res (three were still at the latter site the next day, with two present on 9th). Further north, the 7th May saw numbers increase to six at Nosterfield NR (with seven there the following day and one remaining on 9th May) and parties of four were on Gouthwaite Res and Farnham GP (two remaining the next day). Six headed east at Spurn on 8th, when six were at Swillington Ings, seven flew east over Fairburn Ings and parties of three were at: Welton Waters/Brough Airfield; Pugneys CP (to 9th); Potteric Carr (still present the next day) and Wintersetts Res (two remaining the next day). The final significant pulse took place on 9th May, when seven passed through Swillington Ings, five were on Lingham Lake, nine were at Hay-a-Park GP, nine graced Gouthwaite Res, five visited Hornsea Mere, three headed out east at Spurn, four were at Whiteholme Res and singles visited Elsecar Res, Thrybergh CP and North Cave. Six visited Old Moor on 10th May and the mini-influx ended with a single at Swillington Ings the following day.

The final week of May witnessed singles at: Flasks Lake on 24th and Wintersetts on 27th May; Flasks Lake again 29th May and one headed east over Blacktoft Sands on 29th May.

June's records were confined to singles at Wintersetts on 2nd June and north at Spurn on 16th; the only July record was at the latter location on 31st.

August opened with a single at Fairburn on 1st and the species was also recorded on an almost daily basis at Spurn throughout the month, with maxima of 32 on 17th, 16 on 20th and 11 on 21st August; these were all associated with large aggregations of terns moving south in the evenings to roost. Elsewhere, a juvenile dropped in at Nosterfield NR on 18th August; three tracked past Atwick on 19th, up to four juveniles remained on Hornsea Mere from 19th August-6th September; and a juvenile headed north off Marine Drive, Scarborough on 23rd August. At the month end, singles appeared at Castle Howard, Blackmoorfoot Res and Malham Tarn on 30th August. The same day also brought seven to the Old Moor area, with six at Old Moor itself and another on Broomhill Flash. A single headed past Atwick on 31st August.

In the first week of September there were singles at Thrybergh CP on 2nd; Hay-a-Park on 3rd September; Swillington Ings on 4th; 12 flew past Spurn on 6th, when there were also two off Flamborough and singles at Swillington Ings, Cowbar and South Gare (latter still present on 7th). A single visited Gouthwaite Res on 7th September, with a single east over Blacktoft Sands on 9th.

Wintersetts Res hosted a single on 10th, with parties of four and eight dropping in at Southfield Res the following day, when four hawked over Wintersetts Res and Pugneys CP. Two appeared at Patrington Haven and six fed over Eccup Res on 12th September. The 13th brought a small arrival with two at Potteric, one at Swillington, three at Farnham GP and one north past Filey Brigg; seven appeared over Wintersetts Res and a single visited Rother Valley CP and five were at Paull Holme Strays (with one remaining the next day). Twelve were logged passing Spurn on 14th September, while Blackmoorfoot Res attracted a single the following day. A single visited North Duffield Carrs on 23rd September and several visited Fairburn Ings in the latter half of the month, with the last noted on 29th. A single that arrived at Farnham on 24th remained until the month end. Swillington Ings hosted a lone individual on 2nd October and the single at Farnham was last recorded on 3rd.

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis* **A**
Amber list: fairly common passage migrant and non-breeding summer visitor. BBS 1/204

The currently increasing western European population of the nominate race winters off West Africa.

Small numbers were noted regularly during the summer months south of the Tees, with the last single off Redcar on 8th October. Scarborough's first flew north past Jackson's Bay on 27th April. During late spring/early

summer the only double-figure counts from the Scarborough coastline were 17 north at Long Nab on 6th May and 27 on the rocks at Scalby Mills on 17th June. Long Nab seawatches then produced 120 on 6th July, 90 south on both 4th/10th August and 80 on 17th August. Twenty-two flying past on 1st September constituted the year's last double figure count and the final single was logged on 4th October.

Filey's first were five north on 13th April and the best spring count related to 35 on 13th May. Numbers started to increase in July, with regular northerly movements including 39 on 6th, 252 on 20th and 60 on 21st July. August proved disappointing with only 81 on 30th. September's best was 47 south on 22nd, and Filey's last record came on 18th October. Although there were records from Flamborough from 4th April to 1st November, the numbers were consistently lower than ten years ago and this trend seemed to be reflected from other coastal locations. Numbers peaked during July, with 326 logged on 20th, while 187 were recorded on 13th August and 100 similarly on 6th September. To place such numbers into context, in an average year such as 1995, Flamborough logged four daily counts over 500, including 800 in early August.

Spurn's first appeared on 18th April, after which single figures were seen regularly through May and June. In early July numbers started to build on the Humber, with 105 on 2nd and 250 on 22nd. Roost movements were low, with highs of 234 on 26th August and 260 on 30th, followed by 215 on 4th September. Small numbers were seen regularly to early October, with three the last on 25th October.

Swillington Ings had its best ever year and recorded the first inland, when three visited briefly on 4th April; the same site then attracted a single on 26th April. Several were noted on 27th April: a single visited Otley, two spent five minutes over Wintersetts and Swillington hosted another duo. A single flew east over Fairburn Ings on 10th May, with another two east over the same site the next day. Unusually, a single at Swillington Ings from mid-morning on 17th May was still present the following day. A party of five dropped in at Potteric Carr on 24th May, while along the Humber, Paull Holme Strays hosted a single three days later. Two flew west over Blacktoft Sands on 2nd June, with a single east over Fairburn Ings on 4th. Singles visited Paull Holme Strays on 1st July and headed east over Blacktoft Sands on 3rd July. Other records during the same month included two at Edderthorpe Flash on 21st, four at Patrington Haven on 27th (two still present the next day) and two visited Meadowgate Lake NR on 31st July. A single tracked west over Swillington Ings on 24th August, the same site recorded a single east on 8th September and finally, two visited Patrington Haven on 12th September.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo* **A**
Amber list: scarce breeding summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant. BBS 4/204

British birds of this Holarctic species winter along the West African coast. The small breeding population in the county has increased, taking the opportunities offered of newly formed islands and tern rafts on reserves.

Site & Date				
	First date of pairs	Number fledged	Young	Last date
Farnham GP	27/4	3	6	24/8
North Cave	16/4	5	2	1/9
Pugneys CP	16/4	5	1+	12/10
Ripon City Quarry	-	1	2	-
Southfield Res	20/4	2	0	12/9

None nested at Bran Sands Saline Lagoon, Fairburn Ings, Rodley NR, Old Moor and Otley Wetland, all of which have held breeding pairs over recent years. The Worsborough pair faced a traumatic time when their nesting raft containing two chicks was blown from its anchors by a severe westerly gale on 21st June and smashed against the dam wall. Remarkably, both young managed to scramble onto the disused nest of a Great Crested Grebe, from where they both fledged seven days later.

Scarborough's first visited the harbour on 28th April, but more unusual were 14 east at Wykeham Lakes on 17th May. Returning birds were logged from 28th June and small numbers continued to be seen through July and August; peak counts included 80 north at Marine Drive on 21st July, 96 north at Long Nab on 3rd August and

280 north at the same site on 18th August. However, the largest counts occurred in early September when 400 flew north at Long Nab on 3rd and 250 went north off Marine Drive two days later. There were few records after early September and four past Long Nab on 28th September were Scarborough's last.

Southbound passage started at Filey from 24th June, with daily records in July including 95 on 27th, 308 on 29th and 200 on 30th. The Brigg roost peaked at 180 on 11th August, while September's best consisted of 95 south on 5th September. Filey's final record related to a single on 6th October.

Flamborough recorded a presence from 26th April to 4th October, with 141 on 26th July the first notable tally. Numbers peaked during August with 883 logged on 23rd, while 115 on 7th September was that month's best.

Spurn's first flew east on 17th April and numbers never exceeded low double figures until mid-summer, when 1000 gathered on the Humber on 11th July. However it was early August before the evening roost movements increased significantly. High counts included 7100 on 6th; 13,400 on 10th; 13,200 on 11th; 10,000 on 17th; 8550 on 19th; 7000 on 26th August; and 7300 on 4th September. Five singles were noted in October, with the last on 17th.

ROSEATE TERN *Sterna dougallii* **A**

Red list and UK BAP species: scarce coastal migrant, most frequent in late summer/autumn

A widespread species that breeds in the Americas, north-west Europe, southern Africa, through the Indian Ocean to Australasia.

Single adults were at South Gare on 28th June and 5th July, with four present the following day. Another adult was present on 12th July, with a juvenile on 17th August and South Gare's last was an adult on 7th September. Long Nab, Scarborough logged two adults north on 18th August and another adult north on 3rd September.

In keeping with other sites, Filey had a much quieter year which started with a single on 6th July, joined by another the following day. A single lingered around the Brigg from 30th July-1st August, with singles then recorded on 11th, 15th and 19th August.

Flamborough logged adults on 21st and 28th June, but there were no further records until August. An adult headed south on 2nd, while four adults flew north on 8th August. Later in the month, adults flew past the Headland on 26th and 27th August. Finally an adult flew south on 21st September.

A single on Barmston beach on 3rd September and singles off Grimston on 24th, 30th/31st August; two headed south past Holmpton on 6th September. Four adults visited Beacon Ponds on 5th July, with two off Spurn the next day. Another adult visited Beacon Ponds on 20th July. In August, two flew south at Spurn on 3rd, followed by up to six moving daily in the evening roost movements from 10th August to the month end. Two headed south on 4th September, with another duo similarly two days later.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea* **A**

Amber list: uncommon to fairly common passage migrant and non-breeding summer visitor

Breeds in northern Europe and the Arctic and winters at sea, making a journey between the two polar regions. Migrates across the UK in spring, many leaving via the Humber.

A blank spring at Scarborough, with the first four flying south past Long Nab on 12th July. Thereafter passage remained light, apart from an isolated tally of 400 north at Long Nab on 21st July. A few October records included two on 29th and a late juvenile frequented the Harbour/South Bay area on 4th-5th November.

Filey's only spring record related to a single on 28th April. July featured single figure counts, until 17 went north on 20th July and 75 north the following day. August/September was very disappointing, with a best of 15 south on 5th September; a juvenile on 19th October was Filey's last.

Flamborough's records spanned 10th May to 5th October, with just 171 bird/days logged; the highest counts were a meagre 24 on 26th July and 25 on 2nd August.

Spurn received the lion's share of spring records, as birds headed out east from the Humber. Four on 20th April were the first and a total of 531 were logged heading east by 2nd June, with high counts of 54 on 5th May, 42 on 9th, 174 on 19th, and 47 on 21st May. In line with other coastal sites, Spurn's autumn counts were much lower than recent years. The highest were 80 on 6th August, 55 on 20th August; and 43 on 6th September. A late bird was off the Point on 2nd November.

Inland the first appeared at Fairburn Ings on 15th April, with up to six then present there until 10th May. Elsewhere, two appeared at Elland GP on 17th April and a single dropped in at Otley GP the following day. Higher counts included 19 through Swillington Ings on 23rd April, 29 at Potteric Carr on 29th April and ten at Wintersetts the next day. May records included ten at Swillington Ings and six at Flasks Lake on 4th and 30 east over Ripon on 28th May.

GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge* **A**

Amber list: fairly common coastal breeder and passage migrant, less so in winter

A common seabird of the northern temperate oceans, susceptible to oiling.

Yorkshire continues to play host to the largest Guillemot colony in England stretching from Flamborough Head northwards to Scarborough.

The number of birds present at Bempton/Flamborough during the early months fluctuated greatly. On most days none were present but, occasionally tens of thousands of birds would return to the colony, only to depart a day or two later. Such arrivals coincided with large counts on the Flamborough seawatches, with a maximum of 6600 on 27th February; it is not known what drives these visits, or where the birds spend their time feeding during the rest of the winter. Away from the colony, small numbers could be seen throughout much of January and February off Flamborough and Filey, whilst at Spurn it was only noted on two dates in January, 18 days in February and six dates in March with maxima of 225 alcids, probably this species, on 26th February. It is interesting to note that when large arrivals took place at Bempton/Flamborough, there were no large counts further north or south along the coast. A general return to breeding sites took place from late March.

Over 59,000 were recorded on the cliffs of Flamborough and Bempton during a whole colony census (KC). A remarkable increase in numbers since the first whole colony count in 1978 when 12,750 birds were present, increasing to 32,600 by 1987 and 44,893 when the last census was undertaken for Seabird 2000. The colony is now probably the third or fourth largest in the UK, and as with colonies on the west coast, appears to be bucking the declines seen in the Scottish islands and mainland.

RAZORBILL *Alca torda* **A**

Amber list: fairly common coastal breeder/passage migrant, less common in winter

Breeds in the North Atlantic: the subspecies *islandica* found in Britain winters further south.

The wintering areas and feeding behaviour of this species appear to differ substantially from the Guillemot as very few sightings occur in January and February and return trips to the colony are a rare spectacle. Most reports during this period were restricted to occasional sightings on seawatches at Flamborough Head. One was off Scarborough on 7th January, whilst at Spurn three were present on 27th January, with up to five on four dates in February and on the first four days in March. Many birds were back on the breeding grounds by mid-March.

During the breeding season the main concentrations were typically at Bempton Cliffs and Flamborough Head where a whole colony count revealed a dramatic and continued increase in the breeding population from 1700 birds in 1969 to a staggering 15,000 birds in 2008, making this colony one of the largest in the UK. Estimates suggest that this colony now supports approximately 3% of the European population.

Counts at Filey during the breeding season, including 420 feeding off Filey Brigg on 9th June, could have involved birds from Bempton and the small colony to the north of Filey, between the Brigg and Cayton Bay. Unfortunately, no counts were made of this colony which is only viewable from the sea.

Razorbill deaths, caused by drowning in fixed salmon and sea trout nets in Filey Bay peaked in June, with over 100 reported dead in a two day period mid-month. Guillemots were also affected but in smaller numbers as they tend to feed further from the shore.

The breeding colony at Boulby Cliffs, in the north-east, maintained its recent population level, with up to 62 adults on the sea in early April. Fewer were noted later in the month, but a count of occupied ledges in July suggested a total of 23 pairs.

Most birds had fledged by mid-June when feeding flocks, often incorporating recently fledged young, were widely reported in Bridlington Bay, including 100 at Skipsea on several dates in June, 160 at Ulrome on 26th July and 390 at Atwick on 8th August. During this period counts at Long Nab showed a progressive increase from 150 flying north on 1st June, to 500 past on 12th June and an impressive 1500 north on 21st July. Eight adults, each accompanied by a juvenile, on the sea at Skinningrove on 23rd July may have originated from the Boulby colony.

Sightings were scarce from August to December, with 100 feeding off Atwick in early October and a maximum of 11 at Spurn on 29th December.

BLACK GUILLEMOT *Cephus grille* **A**

0,2,0,6,1

Rare winter visitor and passage migrant

This circumpolar species breeds in northern Scotland where it is mostly sedentary, with only limited dispersal from its breeding colonies.

The only substantiated report related to a single off Filey Brigg on 13th September, which later flew south (JS *et al.*).

LITTLE AUK *Alle alle* **A**

Uncommon to fairly common passage migrant/winter visitor

This species breeds principally in Svalbard and north-west Greenland, wintering in the north Atlantic and the northern sector of the North Sea. The numbers recorded each year will clearly involve some double counting.

It was very much a case of ‘after the Lord Mayor’s parade’ following several years of good numbers. Typically, there were very few records early on, apart from two north at Flamborough on 2nd February.

An early autumn influx included one north at Spurn and six north at Flamborough on 23rd September, followed by a further five north at Flamborough the next day. Up to two were then recorded sporadically until 14 flew north at Scarborough, three north at Spurn and one was at Flamborough on 31st October. A light passage on 2nd November produced three north at Long Nab, four north at Spurn and two north at Filey. A scattering of reports continued through November with maxima two north at Scarborough on 21st and four at Filey on 24th. The only December report related to two south at Spurn on 9th.

PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica* **A**

Amber list: fairly common breeder and common passage migrant

Breeds on the coasts of northern France, Britain, Ireland, Scandinavia, Iceland and the Arctic. Winters well out to sea.

Absent from much of the Yorkshire coast between January and early March, with the first a single flying past Flamborough Head on 7th March and eight in Filey Bay on 14th March; many returning to the colony during the last two weeks of March.

One of the best times to gauge the population is to count birds on the cliffs and sea in mid/late April, before the birds have started to incubate; a total of 539 counted on 26th April suggests a further decline in breeding numbers. Whilst this is only a rough approximation of what is actually happening (as Puffins are notoriously difficult to count due to their hole nesting habits), the pattern does mirror similar declines on the Isle of May and the Farne Islands, in Northumberland, and therefore raises concerns about their future.

At Filey a count of 38 off the North Cliffs on 4th April probably referred to birds from the local colony, whereas 168 logged north on 1st June probably related to a feeding movement from the much larger population at Bempton.

Late June typically produces the highest seawatch counts when many non-breeders visit the colony to prospect for nest sites. This year 544 were logged going south past Filey Brigg in one hour on 29th June, 241 flew south past Long Nab on 12th July, 200 flew south past Filey Brigg on 22nd July and over 1000 passed Flamborough Head on 26th July.

The last of the year headed north at Spurn on 25th October and a single was off Flamborough Head on 21st November.

FERAL PIGEON/ROCK DOVE *Columba livia* **AC4**

A common breeding resident in towns and cities and along coastal cliffs

BBS 62/204: -9% (-10) 1994-2008, +22% (-5) 2007-08

Despite an apparent increase in 2008 there remains a long-term decline although may be under-recorded in urban environments.

Very few records of note, but doubtless under-recorded. The largest numbers were recorded at Flamborough where at least 600 fed on the extensive cliff top stubbles in September/October; smaller numbers also frequented similar habitat at Filey. Other notable counts included: 300 at Thrybergh CP in early August, 200 at Melton Bottom in September and 400 at Routh Pits in November.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas* **A**

Amber list: fairly common resident; some passage and immigration

BBS 50/204: +53% (-10) 1994-2008, -21% (-19) 2007-08

Local populations are sedentary, although Scandinavian birds may swell numbers in winter. Although the long-term trend in the county had been upwards from 1994-2004, there has been a fairly steep decline recorded since then in BBS that continued this year.

There were widespread records of flocks of up to 40, but there were no three figure counts. Noteworthy records related to 45 in the Old Malton area in January, 60 in Cotterdale in February, 60 at Barmston in March and 50 at Tophill Low in December. Light southerly passage was noted at Spurn with 74 between 7th February and 31st May, including seven on both 29th and 30th March, although only 16 were logged from 17th August and 9th November.



Stock Dove ●
Ray Scally

WOOD PIGEON *Columba palumbus* **A**

Abundant and widespread resident and passage migrant/winter visitor

BBS 179/204: +76% (+41) 1994-2008, +17% (+12) 2007-08

Continuing inexorably to increase in range and population, this now common urban species is an agricultural pest in many rural areas. The spread of oilseed rape has been shown to promote overwinter survival, and this crop has increased in the east of the county.

Large flocks in the first winter period included: 2000 roosting at Burnt Wood, Treeton on 2nd; 2000 at Ulley CP on 13th January; 1500 at Aughton and 1000 at Ulley. The only four figure counts in February were 1000 at Staveley, 1500 at Stone and up to 8000 at Fairburn. Flock sizes then began to decrease, with 700 at Selby on 16th March and 700 at Ulley CP in April. There was only light spring passage recorded at Spurn with 359 south between 17th February and 4th June.

Very few breeding records were received but included 15 pairs at Upper Dunsforth Carr and 20 pairs at Blacktoft Sands RSPB.

There was minimal autumn passage at Spurn with just 90 flying south between 8th October and 27th November. Further north numbers peaked at Flamborough in October with 480 on 7th, 1200 on 18th and 520 on 19th, while 507 flew south over Speeton on 11th October.

Inland, migration counts in the Sheffield area were comparable with previous years and counts from Redmires Res included: 1060 north-west on 31st October; 5000 north-west on 1st November; 1170 on 9th; 4655 south-west on 16th and lastly 2700 on 22nd November. Elsewhere 15,000 tracked over Caldene Fields, Bradford on 28th and 29th October.

November records included flocks of 1000 at Leven Valley, Buttercrambe and 1200 at Selby and 2500 at Stainborough Park during the month. Flock sizes increased in December with up to 3000 at Selby, 5500 roosting near Old Moor on 25th and 20,000-50,000 near Staveley NR from 22nd-26th December.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto* **A**

Common resident. BBS 86/204: – 4% (+28) 1994–2008, +18% (+7) 2007–08

Having arrived in Britain in 1952, this species continues to expand in the north–west of Britain, but its population in Yorkshire is now fairly stable or slightly decreasing since 1998. There was, however, an increase in BBS numbers recorded this year.

Reports of this species were widespread, with flocks of up to 30 at many sites. The only notable counts in the first winter period were 40 at Ulley CP on 12th and 120 at East Park, Hull on 23rd January.

A total of 29 breeding pairs in the area north of Leeds was the highest count received; from the few reports received it would appear that that there has been no notable population change. At Fairburn up to 30 were regular, increasing to 60 in September, but then declining to 35 by the end of the year. Peak counts around Eccup Moor included 52 on 1st January, 30 on 13th March, 121 on 19th September and 60 on 3rd November. A flock of 150 were at Rawmarsh on 11th October.

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur* **A**

Red list and UK BAP species: scarce and declining breeding summer visitor. BBS 2/204

The West European populations migrate south–west to winter in the drought–stricken Sahel zone. The national population has fallen by 66% since 1994, contracting eastward and southward, and it is becoming increasingly scarce in Yorkshire.

This species is now becoming so scarce it is possible to list all the records. Early arrivals included singles at Spurn on 27th April and Potteric Carr and Dinnington, Rotherham on 29th; the latter remaining until 2nd May. Other May records included a singing male at Staveley on 2nd, the first of only four records in the Harrogate area; there were singles at Locke Park, Ilkley on 4th and Scalby on 5th May. Filey’s first record appeared on 7th May, with the only other there on 25th. Singles were at Thrybergh CP and Fairburn Ings on 12th, with another at the latter site on 24th. A single was at Meadowgate Lake NR on 20th May, two were calling at Potteric Carr from 13th–15th, with a single calling there on 27th, a male was calling at Went Ings on 22nd and a single flew north over Scalby Lodge Pond on 23rd May. A single in an Alwoodley garden, Leeds on 27th/28th May was notable; at least six were logged at Flamborough in May with records on 4th, 14th, two on 20th, one on 30th and two on 31st. There were records in June from Conisbrough on 6th and Flasks Lake on 15th.

The Barnsley area’s records all came from Winterset, with a singing male(s) on 8th May, 2nd June, 5th and 17th July. Although up to two were present in suitable breeding habitat near Garforth from 8th May to 18th July, there were no confirmed breeding records from the Leeds area. In Sheffield a pair held territory at Ulley CP from 31st May until 7th September, with another singing on the former date. There were up to five calling males at Thorne Moors from 1st May and 11th August and at least one singing male on Hatfield Moors, while the population in the forests inland of Scarborough still clings on. The first appeared in Wykeham Forest on 26th May; there were two records in June and up to 10 present in July, with several records coming from the nursery area. Singles were at Harwood Dale Forest on 16th June, at Langdale End on 14th July and Staintondale Road, Ravenscar on 25th July.

In the York recording area a pair was present on Skipwith Common from 7th May until late June. In addition, calling males were heard during the summer months at Silburn Lock, Pocklington Canal, Yearsley Moor, Allerthorpe GP; others on Skipwith Common, near Coates Bridge on the Pocklington Canal and near Hagg Bridge. However, there was no proof of breeding from any site near York.

There was a very poor showing from the east of the county, which was once a stronghold. A male was calling at Wetwang from 25th May through to 28th June; additional calling birds were recorded at Tophill Low, Watton NR and Pulfin Bog at the end of the first week of May, but did not linger at these former breeding sites. In addition a single called at Beswick from 1st May until 30th June.

There were records from North Cave Wetlands on 16th, two on 30th May, one on 1st, two on 6th June and one on 20th July, and Blacktoft Sands hosted singles on 2nd and 8th June, with two on 26th June. It was a poor year at Spurn with up to five almost daily during May and early June, with a maximum of seven on 11th May. However, despite this there were no breeding attempts, with up to two through until mid–July and singles on 9th and 17th August.

In July two were at Leathley, Tockwith and two flew over Staveley on 16th. August records included singles at Guilthwaite Common, Rotherham on 3rd, two at Went Ings on 5th, Pugney’s CP on 10th, Burniston Gardens on 18th, Cowath Beck, Scarborough on 19th and Scalby on 23rd. There were only four additional records in September with singles at Laughton Common and Dinnington Marsh on 6th, Guilthwaite Common/Ulley CP on 7th and three at Hutton Cranswick on 8th September.

ROSE–RINGED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri* **C1E***

21,9,14,12,10

Rare breeding species and vagrant/escape

Due to increases in the feral British breeding population and to keep in line with BOURC’s decision to give it a C1E* categorisation, this species was moved into the main list in 2004. All Yorkshire records may still be attributable to escapes, however, and until a self–supporting population is established, or ringing evidence proves dispersal from self–sustaining populations elsewhere in England, it is not yet officially on the YNU’s Yorkshire Category C list.

There were few records, with none from just south of the Tees, where the species has bred recently. There were a number of records in Sheffield with singles at: the General Cemetery on 9th/11th and Millhouses on 12th January, Heeley City Farm on 9th February and Stannington on 28th February; two were present at Woodhouse on 14th March. The Sheffield theme continued with a single at Tipton School on 18th March, one over Heeley on 11th April and one at Toad’s Mouth on 26th April. Elsewhere, one flew over Flamborough GC on 8th April. Following one at Sand Hutton in July, one overflew Beverley on 12th July; there were singles in Hull from 22nd July–17th August, on Hatfield Moors on 18th, in a Wybourn garden, Sheffield from 25th–30th August and near Anston Green, Rotherham on 15th November.

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus* **A**

Red list and UK BAP species: fairly common to uncommon breeding summer visitor

BBS 43/204: –57% (–55) 1994–2008, –2% (–16) 2007–08

A widespread Palearctic species that winters south of the Sahara. There has been a worryingly long–term and steady decline since the 1980s.

The decline continues with very few confirmed breeding reports. The Barnsley area’s earliest ever was seen and heard at Carlton Marsh on 7th April, but there were no more until 13th April when two were at Strensall followed by singles at Pulfin on 19th, Old Moor on 20th, and Burley–in–Wharfedale on 22nd.

Calling birds became more widespread at the end of the month and into May, when there were records from a number of widely scattered sites. Breeding was confirmed at Scaling Dam, where at least two pairs were present with a minimum of three fledged young, and also at Askham Bog, North Cliffe Wood, Saltmarshe Delph and Upper Dunsforth Carr. There were also records from 15 sites in the Harrogate area between 21st April and 16th July, but there were no records from the Leeds area away from the Lower Aire valley and no juveniles seen. Numbers held up at Fairburn Ings, where five pairs bred, but a further decline was reported in Wharfedale with records from only 28 sites. Single calling males were heard only occasionally at Blacktoft Sands, Potteric Carr, and North Cave Wetlands, although a juvenile was present there later in the year. In the Rotherham area there were reports from seven sites, up to six males calling on Thorne Moors; although reported from a number of sites in the Barnsley area, only one juvenile was noted.

Singles were recorded at Flamborough on seven dates in May, including three on 20th, but only singles on three dates in June, four in July and one on 4th August; a late single was present at Flamborough on 23rd September. However, in contrast it was the best year at Spurn for many years, with 330 bird/days from 22nd April to 9th September. In addition to the aforementioned, there were September records at Filey on 16th and Mount Darnall, Sheffield on 20th.

BARN OWL *Tyto alba* **A**

Amber list: uncommon resident breeder, rare in north–west. BBS 10/204

The population of this globally widespread species is thought to be increasing locally, particularly in the east, where nest–box schemes have proved successful. Under–recorded on BBS visits and not found in any of the West or South Yorkshire squares.

This species continues to do well across most of the county with a small, but encouraging increase in records in the west. These included one pair fledging four young in Wharfedale, where the male of the breeding pair was ringed as a chick in Nottingham in 2007; the first and second records for Rodley NR on 6th March and 15th October respectively and one pair in potentially suitable breeding habitat near Huddersfield. In the Harrogate area three pairs bred at one site and there were probably breeding pairs at another two sites and additional records from a number of others during the breeding season. One pair bred at one site and possibly at a second in the Swillington area, two pairs bred at Blacktoft Sands RSPB and single pairs bred at North Cave Wetland, Pulfin Bog and Pugney’s CP. A total of six pairs bred in the Kelk area. There was an increase in range in the Sheffield area and a minimum of 23 pairs were thought to be breeding in the Barnsley area. Numbers also increased in the Scarborough area, with three pairs in the Flixton Carrs area and a pair at West Ayton Carr, with probable breeding pairs at Wykeham Ings, Flotmanby, Willerby, Binnington, Folkton Carr, Ruston Carr, Cromer Point and Cayton. Further north, there were regular sightings to the north and west of Guisborough and from the Skelton area, with occasional sightings from Scaling Dam, Saltburn, Errington Wood and Margrove Ponds.

LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua* C1
Uncommon resident in south and west, scarce in east. BBS 6/204

Introduced into England as recently as 1842, but a downturn in recent years suggests a moderate long-term decline. For the second year running, recorded in fewer BBS squares.

No real change in status was reported with numerous records from across the county, including in the north of the county from traditional sites in Cleveland; there were widespread records in the Scarborough area with pairs at West Ayton Carr, Cayton and two successful pairs at Troutsdale. There were also four breeding pairs in the Flamborough area. This species continues to do well in Wharfedale, where there were records from around 30 sites, although birds appeared to be scarcer around Washburn. The breeding density was considered high in the Huddersfield area, widespread around Harrogate (bred at a minimum of four sites) and at least five territorial pairs in the Cononley area. It was recorded throughout the year in the Sheffield area, with the majority from regularly occupied sites in the east, and is also considered widespread around Barnsley.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco* A
Fairly common and widespread resident

Very under-recorded, and not picked up on BBS surveys. This species remains widespread with breeding records from across the county; it often goes relatively unrecorded and therefore it is difficult to determine trends.

This species continues to be under-recorded with very few records received. It remains a fairly common breeding bird in the Scarborough area, is still a common and widespread resident around the Sheffield area and there were a minimum of seven probable and three confirmed breeding pairs in the Huddersfield area. It was reported as more numerous in Mid Wharfedale than Upper Wharfedale, possibly as a result of more comprehensive observer coverage; 21 young fledged from 15 monitored nests. However, there were very few records from around Malham Tarn, due to a crash in the small rodent population. Five or six pairs bred at Tophill Low.



Long-eared Owl o
Michael Henry

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus* A
Scarce breeding resident, passage migrant and irruptive winter visitor. BBS 1/204

Very little data available, and very under-recorded, but population may be stable. Scandinavian migrants of this Holarctic circumpolar species are seen on the coast in autumn.

Records in the first winter period included two at Wilthorpe Marsh on 13th, singles at Flamborough on 17th and 22nd January and on four dates at Ulley CP during the month. In March up to two roosted at Fairburn over the first two weeks, a single roosted at Swillington on at least the 2nd and 12th, and a single was at Allerton

Bywater on 23rd. At Thorpe Marsh up to three birds roosted in January and early February, with at least one remaining until 11th April. In the Barnsley area records were received from Wilthorpe Marsh, Cowell Flats and Carlton Marsh and it was recorded from four non-breeding sites in the Harrogate area during the year.

Coastal migrants were logged at Spurn on: 11th March, 18th, 30th and 31st May, 20th June and presumably the same trapped three days later. Flamborough recorded singles on 5th and 30th April and another migrant was at Reighton on 19th April.

There was a slight increase in the number of breeding records, including one pair that fledged two/three young at Scaling Dam; there were calling birds heard in the Guisborough Forest in late July, and near Burniston during the breeding season, whilst a pair fledged two young near Cayton. In the Yorkshire Dales there were two breeding records from the Hawes area, a single pair at Buckden and a pair probably bred at Malham Tarn.

There was a slight increase in one area of Wharfedale, where comprehensive monitoring showed a minimum of 32 young fledged from 12 nesting attempts; a pair fledged two young near Skipton. There were regular records from Fairburn, where two pairs bred and breeding was reported from a minimum of five sites around Huddersfield. A minimum of two pairs bred at Thorne Moors and present at two sites near Rotherham in May.

Near Barnsley it bred at Winscar (two pairs fledged three and one), Edderthorpe Flash (one pair fledged two young), Carlton Marsh (a pair fledged two young), Long Lane, Bolton Ings and Ewden Beck.

Unusually the majority of migrants in September came from the north of the county with singles at Boulby and Tophill Low on 7th; Warsett Hill near Brotton on 14th and again on 16th; Hunt Cliff on 18th; Buckton on 25th. In October a single visited Goathland on 1st, but most activity focused on the end of the month and coincided with a period of north-easterly winds. A single made landfall at Hunmanby Gap on 29th, with singles the following day at Hunt Cliff and high over Carlton Marsh; October ended with two at Filey on the final day. Singles were logged at Buckton, Filey, Flamborough and South Gare on 1st, two visited Sunk Island on 3rd, a very tired bird sat on Carr Naze, Filey on 6th and one graced Bempton on 8th November. Autumn records from Spurn included singles on 2nd August, 7th September, one in off the sea on 2nd and 16th October, with another along the peninsula on 22nd. However, in keeping with other coastal sites, a small influx took place during early November, with up to three on nine dates between 1st and 11th.

At the end of December up to three roosted at Fairburn Ings and two were at a site near Skipton; three were in residence at Ulley CP and up to five roosted at Thorpe Marsh throughout the month.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flames* A
Amber list: rare moorland breeder; uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS 9/204

After a drop in 2007, recorded again in nine BBS squares; one in South, three in West and five in North Yorkshire. Wintering birds on the coast and estuaries include continental immigrants.

This species was scarce in many areas with singles at a number of sites during the first winter period, including at Blacktoft Sands, Kettleness, Bempton and Sunk Island, with up to two at Thurcroft Colliery and Silverwood Colliery Tip and two sporadically at Flamborough. Higher numbers included up to five at Cowlam Bottoms in January, up to four at Barden Scale from the start of the year until mid February, five at Silverwood Tip on 10th February and up to eight at Cowlam Bottoms in the first half February. There were very few records around Leeds, with singles at Swillington Ings on two dates in January and two on 22nd, one date in February and two dates in March. Singles on passage during April were recorded at Wombwell Ings on 8th, Hornsea Mere on 11th, Paull Holme Strays on 13th and at Filey on several dates from 18th April. In spring Flamborough recorded singles on eight dates in April, three dates in late May and finally one on 8th June. Spurn logged singles on 22nd and 27th March, 2nd and 26th/27th April, 31st May and finally 9th and 30th June.

Potential breeders were on moorland at the north end of Scaling Dam in May, singles were near Sleddale on at least two days in June, with an adult accompanied by a juvenile there on 6th August. In the Yorkshire Dales birds in potentially suitable breeding habitat were present during April on Askrigg Common, Wether Fell and Barden; one pair reached at least egg stage on Fountains Fell. Although there were several sightings during the summer, there was no evidence of breeding in Wharfedale. Similarly there were only five records from the Harrogate area, with no confirmed breeding records. However there were two territorial birds present in the Cononley area near Skipton, with at least one confirmed nesting pair. Displaying birds were at one site near Huddersfield and in the Bradford area displaying birds were noted on a single date near Bradford, but breeding was not confirmed.

Numbers in the latter half of the year remained low, starting with singles sporadically at Blacktoft Sands from July though to the year end (occasionally two in October/December), a single at Swillington Ings on 7th July and one at Spurn on 20th July. August's records included: a single at Howden Edge on 17th, two at Cromer Point on 21st, two at Patrington Haven and a single at Flamborough on 24th and a single at North Cave Wetlands

on 27th August; Spurn logged up to two on eight days during the month. September records included: singles at Fairburn on 2nd and 4th, Brough Airfield Marsh on 14th, two at Buckton on 17th, singles at Kettleiness on 20th, Swillington Ings on 21st, Sherburn Ings 23rd, Long Nab on 26th/27th and one at Grimston on 28th; also recorded at Spurn on five days during September.

In October singles noted at Speeton Gap on 10th, over Eccup Res and Swillington Ings on 11th, Bolton Ings on 12th/13th and 24th, Scalby Lodge Pond on 13th, two at Swillington Ings on 15th and Filey Country Park on 31st; up to four were present at Flamborough and three at Spurn during the month. In November singles were at Ness Point on 5th, Filey on 6th/7th, Speeton Gap on 8th, Swillington Ings on 16th and Burniston on 29th; up to three were logged on five dates until 12th November at Spurn. Late autumn also produced several records at both Brough Haven and Paull Holme Strays and up to four were at Silverwood and Thurcroft Colliery and a maximum of three at Flamborough during the same period. December ended with up to two at Skelton Lake and a single at Swillington Ings, with one at Spurn on 20th December.

NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus* **A**

Red list and UK BAP species: uncommon breeding summer visitor and passage migrant

This Palearctic species winters in East and southern Africa, with a British population of 4,600 pairs.

The year’s first was at Hay–a–Park, where one hawked for insects every evening from 14th until 21st May. Birds had returned to breeding sites near Sheffield area by 16th May; ten sites along the Pennine fringe of Sheffield hosted churring males, with at least half the sites reporting two present; this represents a marked increase, although better recording coverage is at least partly responsible.

The forests on the edge of the North Yorkshire Moors remain the county’s stronghold area, although few detailed reports were received; the last national survey in 2004 located 229 churring males in North Yorkshire. However, on the northern side, recently cleared areas within Guisborough Wood held at least seven churring males, with a female still present on 2nd September. Thirty churring males were located on Thorne Moors, with 29 similarly on Hatfield Moors, although the survey was hampered by inclement weather during the crucial period.

Unusually, there was a series of records from Spurn; the first was flushed at dusk off Peters Lane, Easington on 28th May. Two days later a single was discovered in the Wire Dump area, with another the same day near the riding school, north of Spurn; that evening a single was calling as it flew around the Crown. On 31st May one flew over Kew and possibly the same flew over Kilnsea at 2230 hrs that evening. In June a single rested within the dunes north of Beacon Ponds on 9th, with a single around the Warren at 2230 hrs the following day. The final record of spring related to one late evening over Canal Hedge on 20th June that went south.

A male flushed from an East Keswick garden on 9th June constituted the first Leeds record since 1976.

Autumn brought further records at Spurn, with singles in Church Field on 9th and 18th August and a single sat on a garden fence in Easington on 31st. On 1st September one was flushed from the churchyard and a female fed around the Warren at dusk on 2nd. Away from Spurn, a single was flushed at North Landing, Flamborough on 22nd September and the year’s last related to a female flushed at Spurn on 28th September.

SWIFT *Apus apus* **A**

Amber list: common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant

BBS 93/204: –36% (–30) 1994–2008, +7% (+8) 2007–08

There has been a long–term decline in breeding numbers of this trans–Saharan migrant, and it no longer features in the top 15 most common birds in the county. This year saw a slight recovery in numbers.

A single at North Cave on 17th April was the first, followed by singles at Wilthorpe Marsh and at Winterset on 19th; a single was at Fairburn two days later, with another at Southfield Res on 22nd and a more widespread arrival then occurred from 24th. This build up continued for the rest of April, with 200 at Winterset by 28th and 1000 at Thorne Moors on 30th.

Numbers continued to increase in May with 600 at Winterset on 19th, while 1600 passed through Thornton Moor Res on 24th; Fairburn held 700 on 26th and 720 were over Brough the following day. In June 1106 passed Flamborough on 10th, with 900 at Winterset on 14th. By mid–June return passage back south had started and parties 60–strong headed south at Jackson’s Bay, Scarborough on 18th, followed by 237 south in 90 minutes on 22nd. Summer congregations included 550 at Southfield Res on 3rd and 17th July; 2470 flew south at Long Nab on 6th with another 1500 the next morning; Winterset recorded 700 on 17th July and Nosterfield Quarry had 500 on 19th and 400 still remained in the general area on 26th. In August most sites reported lower numbers, but Flamborough logged 550 on 20th.

Southbound passage at Spurn totalled 39,865 with the bulk moving through from mid–June to mid–July; peak counts were 2250 on 17th June, 2700 on 18th, 5000 on 22nd and 11,900 on 25th June. Numbers dropped in

early July with 5192 on 2nd, followed by 1100 on 15th July, with 1350 the next day. Good numbers continued into August, with 1000 south on 2nd and 950 on 19th.

Breeding reports seldom gave much detailed information, although several indicated either a stable situation, or a reduction in numbers; parts of Leeds and Guisborough lacking breeding birds for the first time in living memory.

Thirteen remained in the Scarborough area on 19th September and the following day a single was near Treeton, Sheffield and three were at Scalby; one flew south at Spurn on 29th September, while the last was recorded at Flamborough on 11th October.

PACIFIC SWIFT *Apus pacificus*

0,1,0,0,1

Vagrant; one previous record in 2005

Breeds in W Siberia east to Kamchatka and Japan. Northern breeders winter throughout SE Asia & south to Australia. Other races breed in the Himalayas and Indochina to the Malay Peninsula.

The second record for Spurn (and Yorkshire) flew south over Beacon Ponds at 1545hrs on 22nd June; however, it was lost to view over the northern part of Beacon Lane and failed to make it to the seawatching hut (JC: JMT *et al.*). The fact that it must have headed west and U–turned was confirmed when it remarkably gave some observers a ‘second–bite’ on 26th June, when it flew south over the Triangle at 1530 hrs; again it U–turned, this time over the Narrows and flew back north towards Easington (TMc *et al.*).

LITTLE SWIFT *Apus affinis*

0,0,0,0,1

Vagrant; two previous records

Increasing and expanding in Morocco. Breeds locally and discontinuously in the Middle East from Israel to south–east Turkey. Largely resident, but some Middle East populations are migratory. Elsewhere, it is resident or dispersive throughout sub–Saharan Africa and the Indian subcontinent to Sri Lanka.

Incredibly, 20 minutes after the Pacific Swift had flown north at Spurn on 26th June, a Little Swift flew south past the sea–watching hut at 1550hrs, undoubtedly causing plenty of confusion to the incredulous lucky few birders (TMc *et al.*). This represented a new bird for the Spurn list; the sixth swift species to be recorded there.

However, presumably the same individual relocated to Old Moor on 2nd July, where it was found at 0715hrs (JHe: JMT: DMW *et al.*). Although it disappeared at 0850hrs, it returned at 1315hrs and stayed until 1720hrs, when it moved off in front of a band of heavy rain.

The county’s first record was at Flamborough in July 1988, while the second flew along Boulby Cliffs in May 1998; presumably the next will appear in 2018?

KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis* **A**

Amber list: uncommon to scarce resident breeder. BBS 3/2204

Reported widely across the county, there were indications of a slight increase from many areas. Pairs bred/probably bred at 15 sites within the Sheffield area; similarly the Barnsley area held up to 20 breeding pairs, including at Old Moor, Bolton Ings, Elsecar Res, Wilthorpe Marsh, Wentworth Lakes, Wortley Top Falls, and sites on the River Dove. The population around Leeds was reported to be in healthy numbers; it was present at several sites along the River Aire; further upstream on the same river, a pair fledged two broods near Cononley.

However, in contrast to other areas, Upper Wharfedale reported a 25% overall decrease, with only one confirmed and one possible breeding pair. At least two pairs bred at Fairburn Ings and a pair fledged two young on Pipers Marsh, Potteric Carr.

In the east, pairs bred on the River Tees near Portrack and probably on the River Leven. The Scarborough area reported birds as being widely distributed, with proven breeding at Scalby Mills, Cayton Carr, Low North Camp and Burton Riggs.

Post–breeding dispersal was evident along the coast, with a scattering of records at Spurn from mid–August to early November, including only Spurn’s fifth to be ringed since 1945, caught at the Warren on 22nd August.

A single at South Landing, Flamborough on 30th March was only the eighth record for the Headland.

BEE–EATER *Merops apias* **A**

2,2,2,5,5

Rare visitor from southern Europe; 96 previous records (143 birds)

This Mediterranean species breeds throughout southern Europe, and is now a regular over–shooting spring visitor to the county, with Spurn Point the premier location.

Three flew east just north of Old Fall, Flamborough on 9th May (AMA), one flew through East Newton on 14th May (AFJ) followed by one south over Easington at 1400hrs on 29th May (MGS).

HOOPOE *Upupa epops* 4,2,5,0,4
Rare visitor from Europe; almost annual with 260 previous records
The first appeared on Thorne Moors on 4th April (CE). North of Scarborough, a single lingered in the Scalby Lodge Farm/Cromer Point area on 26th April (AF *et al.*). The next flew over the Potato Field at Spurn at 1635hrs on 23rd May (AAH). Finally one took up residence around a farmyard on the outskirts of Dunnington from 20th–22nd July; appreciated by birders and photographers alike, it even featured on the local TV news.

WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla* A 31,57,13,4,33
Red list and UK BAP species: scarce coastal passage migrant, rare inland.
Breeds across Eurasia through to Japan; it has been extinct in Britain since 1993. The European population mostly winters south of the Sahara and migrating Scandinavian birds occur regularly in the county in spring and autumn.
The only spring record related to one at Parish Wood, Filey on 25th May (J&TGD).
Autumn's first remained on South Gare on 17th/18th August (AK *et al.*), with singles at the Point at Spurn (NP: JMT *et al.*) and Warsett Hill (DAM) on 31st.

Light north–easterly winds prevailed during September resulting in an excellent arrival from the end of the first week. Three were present at South Gare (MAB *et al.*) and two were at Brotton Golf Course (DAM) on 6th. The following day numbers increased to four at South Gare (SCB *et al.*), with two at Warsett Hill (DAM) and singles at Saltwick Nab and Crookness, near Long Nab (NWA *et al.*). One remained on South Gare on 8th September, with a single the same day briefly at Pallas's Pond on Spurn that relocated to near the Blue Bell (KS). A half–eaten corpse at the Point at Spurn on 9th possibly related to the individual noted at the end of August.

A single appeared inland at Norland Moor, near Sowerby Bridge bird on 11th (MC). A fall on Flamborough Head produced no fewer than six on 13th (RAB: PC: JMP *et al.*). The 14th produced singles at Spurn (RJS *et al.*) and Sammy's Point (the latter until 16th) and another appeared inland, on this occasion in the York recording area by the River Foulness at Water End (it stayed for two days, but was picked up dead on 16th). Spurn logged two new arrivals on 15th: one in Church Field that later moved into the triangle (AAH) and another around the lighthouse that stayed until 18th (JG *et al.*). Another appeared at the Point on Spurn on 16th (remaining until 21st) and Spurn's final new arrival made landfall at post 48 on 17th. Elsewhere, the gorse field at Flamborough also hosted one on 17th September (RAB *et al.*).

The year's third inland record occurred in Upper Wharfedale, when one showed well at Barden Scale on 18th (HMC). A single was discovered around Old Fall, Flamborough on 24th (AMA), followed two days later by a single at Boulby (MAB).

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis* A
Amber list: uncommon resident. BBS 23/204
A European species that is expanding northwards in Britain, possibly due to climate change. Although it is recorded from many localities from across the region, it remains scarce in the Holderness area of East Yorkshire. However the species was noted in a total of 23 out of 204 BBS squares, which represented the best showing so far.

Records suggest that it is continuing to expand, especially in the west, with most areas reporting a general increase. There were reports of yaffling from 26 sites in the Sheffield area, with breeding confirmed at six. It was also reported as widely, but thinly distributed in the Barnsley area and bred at several sites including five on the moors on the western fringe of the recording area; three pairs bred at Old Moor. Further north there were reports from 45 sites in Upper Wharfedale, with breeding again confirmed at several. It remained scarce along the coastal fringe although two were at Ravenscar on 20th May and a single visited Filey Dams on 7th March and another took up residence in the Primrose Valley/Reighton area from 27th September to 17th December.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major* A
Fairly common resident; scarce passage migrant in autumn. BBS 56/204
The population of the resident subspecies *anglicus* continues to increase rapidly, both nationally and locally, and it is an increasingly familiar sight at bird tables. Nominate race birds from Scandinavia are occasional immigrants.
Regularly reported from stunted trees of the high Dales down to the coast in every suitable area of trees ranging from town parks to large belts of woodland.
Notable counts included seven at High Batts NR near Ripon on 6th January and also seven at Linacre Res on 19th January. Wharnccliffe Woods held 13 on 26th June, including four juveniles. Nine territories were reported from Wintersetts this year, although this was down substantially on the record 15 present the previous year.

Coastal records included: two at Scarborough Castle on 8th September and a single in off the sea at Filey on 26th September. Spurn recorded a poor year, with only 35 bird/days: singles were reported on eight dates in October, with three on the 6th (two of which flew off high to the south), and just three singles in November, up to the last on 17th.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos minor* A
Red list and UK BAP species: scarce resident, rare in south–east
The national population is declining significantly, and although South Yorkshire remains a relative stronghold, all records need to be reported. Not found in any BBS squares this year.

It was recorded from 69 sites of which 20 were in the Sheffield area, with breeding behaviour noted from at least eight sites. However, this represents a steady decline: in 2007 it was reported from 27 sites, with breeding behaviour noted at 16; in 2006 there were reports from 36 sites and signs of breeding at 14 sites. Favoured woodlands around Sheffield included: Elsecar Res, Beeley Wood, Bingham Park and Wharnccliffe Wood. There were a scattering of records from the Rotherham area, primarily in the first half of the year.

In the Bradford area mostly singles were reported from nine sites, but a pair did breed at Hirst Wood. In the Leeds area breeding was proved at Swillington Park and three pairs were on territories in North Leeds. Fairburn Ings hosted singles at either end of the year.

Three sites in Upper Wharfedale recorded the species, with drumming at two of these; a single on reed stems over a garden pond in Beamsley on 5th November offered good views! The picture was similar around Harrogate, with a scattering of records focused around Ripon and two regularly around Littlethorpe; although drumming from January to March, there was no confirmed breeding.

Two were present at Potteric Carr and drumming was heard in May and a single visited Hatfield Moors on 26th July. Further east, a male was calling and drumming in Forge Valley near Scarborough on 3rd May and Tophill Low hosted a single on 26th July.



Lesser Spotted Woodpecker •
Ray Scally

WOOD LARK *Lullula arborea* **A**

Amber list and UK BAP species: scarce breeding visitor and passage migrant

A partial migrant, the small UK population has recently expanded northwards, possibly due to climate change.

Early in the year, a single flew east over the Cooper Bridge Plant, Huddersfield on 14th February. In the Sheffield area, a long-staying single at Pit-house West was last noted on 9th March, with another over Rother Valley CP on 23rd March. Well inland, a single flew over Nosterfield NR with Skylarks on 8th March.

Migrants included a single at Northcliff, Flamborough on 10th February with presumably the same seen nearby on 29th March and again on 23rd April. Elsewhere, a single flew south at Blacktoft Sands on 9th April (first reserve record) and one frequented the Church Field at Spurn on 10th/11th April.

Breeding birds returned to the Central Science Laboratory at Sand Hutton on the extremely early date of 28th January. Two singing males eventually established territory and it is possible two pairs bred there. A pair was present on Skipwith Common on 8th February with three singing males on 24th February. Five pairs attempted to breed on Skipwith, though they appeared largely unsuccessful due to the wet summer and high levels of predation; the wing of a juvenile was discovered in the nest of a Tawny Owl. Four territories were recorded during the MOD survey of Strensall Common on 23rd May and three were singing on Allerthorpe Common on 29th May. Birds were also reported from three other locations within the York recording area. In addition to the heathlands surrounding York, the Doncaster area appears to be a county stronghold and although detailed records were not received, at least seven pairs were present on Hatfield Moors.

Interestingly, there were no autumn records either inland or along the coast.

SKY LARK *Alauda arvensis* **A**

Red list and UK BAP species: common resident; passage migrant and winter visitor

BBS 152/204: +4% (–17) 1994–2008, +9% (–3) 2007–08

This Palearctic species has been in long-term national decline. However, in the county it seems to have been fairly stable since 1994 and reports suggest that there has been some recovery for the last three years.

Early winter flocks included 65 at Beal Carrs on 3rd January and 80 around Filey during January. Numbers continued to build during March with 76 at Flamborough on 19th, 45 at Otley on 23rd, 50 at Wholestone Moor, Huddersfield on 31st and 100 over Swillington Ings in the month.

At Spurn, spring passage was light, with just 58 south between 28th January and 9th June and a maximum of just 11 on 9th March.

Breeding success appeared to be poor and subsequent flock sizes were disappointing in many areas. Only 19 territories were located around Winterset (37 in 2007), reflecting a noticeable reduction of pairs in fields to the west of the Country Park. A total of 62 pairs bred at Fairburn Ings (an estimated 100 in 2007), there were 21 singing males at Blackmoorfoot Res and 15 singing males were on high ground at Great Whernside.

Post-breeding flocks remained in low double figures until October, when many sites recorded passage and included: 100 at East Rigton, Leeds on 2nd October, 73 south over Winterset on 12th, 165 at Flamborough on 13th, 150 high over Whixley, York on 19th and 43 west over Blackmoorfoot Res on 27th October.

Up to 250 were present at Wilfholme Carrs, Hull during October/November and good numbers remained at Filey, with 120 present on 2nd and 80 on 31st December. Eighty were present at Staveley on 30th December.

Southerly passage over Spurn in autumn was again light, with 1519 south (and 70 in off the sea) from 23rd August and 7th December; the only treble-figure counts were 128 on 6th October, 160 on 9th, 239 on 13th and 159 on 22nd October.

SHORE LARK *Eremophila alpestris* **A**

72,36,19,10,2

Amber list: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

The European race *flava* winters in fluctuating numbers on the British coasts, with some birds staying in Yorkshire and others moving north along the coast in spring.

It was an extremely poor year for a once regular winter visitor, with just two records: a spring migrant at Flamborough Golf Course on 16th April (RAB: KB: JPD) followed by a very unseasonal and long stayer at Spurn. First discovered at Beacon Ponds on 13th July, it was re-found at the Point on 17th (PSe *et al.*). It remained in the area for the next month and eventually settled in the area in front of the Chalk Bank hide from 20th August to 5th October. A single at Beacon Ponds on 11th October was presumably the same bird. The following table charts the decline.

Annual Shore Lark declining counts											
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Winter/Spring	43	122	6	0	4	27	50	11	3	3	1
Autumn	250	41	10	11	25	61	22	25	16	7	1

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia* **A**

Amber list: fairly common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. BBS 15/204

The population of this sub-Saharan migrant is stable or slightly increasing.

The first arrived back very early on 2nd March at Leventhorpe in Leeds. The next were six days later, with two at Rother Valley CP and four at Blackmoorfoot Res, followed by three at Blackburn Meadows NR, two at Broomhill Flash and singles at Thrybergh CP, Knotford Nook, Otley and Staveley NR on 9th March. Birds became widespread by the end of March. Large numbers were recorded throughout April: there were 250 at Thrybergh CP, 500 at Hatfield Moors and 150 moving north at Nosterfield NR on 5th, 600 present at Pugney's CP on 11th, 450 at Winterset Res on 13th, also 450 present at Thrybergh CP on 18th, when 300 were present at Rother Valley CP and 480 over Welton Waters. Towards the end of the month, counts peaked at 500 at Rother Valley CP on 20th April, 350 at Nosterfield NR on 24th and 650 at Old Moor on 27th. Fairburn recorded up to 400 during April. Spring passage was uneventful at Spurn, with just 726 south by early June, with a peak of 160 on 5th May.

Nesthole counts at breeding colonies included: 120 at Jackson's Bay, Scarborough; 100 at Pool, Otley; 61 at CSL, Sand Hutton; 60 at Barden Bridge on the Wharfe; 50 at Aldwarke, Sheffield; 30 at Littondale on the Wharfe and 30 at Cromer Point, Scarborough. A previously healthy colony of 50–60 nestholes at Mickles Ings, Otley reduced to just 18 this year.

Established colonies were present along much of the Wharfe up to Conistone, but there were no records from Langstrothdale. High summer river levels again washed out the second brood at Pool, Otley. Flooding earlier in the year caused severe bank erosion resulting in only one pair nesting near Linton, Wetherby. At Farnham GP, 76 of the 79 holes in the artificial wall were occupied by 5th June and another artificial colony at nearby Staveley NR contained fledged young by 28th June. Colonies along the River Ure again suffered, with second broods washed out in August.

With the exception of Blacktoft, post-breeding numbers were not exceptional with: 250 at Farnham GP on 5th, 100 at Staveley on 19th August, 150 at Pugney's CP on 1st, 250 at Thrybergh CP on 4th and 100 at Nosterfield NR on 6th September. However, Blacktoft recorded 5000 on 14th August, although this represented a considerable reduction from 2007.

At Spurn the autumn passage was an improvement over that of 2007, with 6397 moving south between 2nd July and 13th October and high counts of: 1258 on 2nd and 2000 on 15th July, reducing throughout August to just 108 on 25th. The year's last referred to a single at Winterset on 4th and six at Spurn on 13th October.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica* **A**

Amber list: common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant

BBS 161/204: +10% (+30) 1994–2008, +4% (–3) 2007–08

The population each year is variable, perhaps depending on factors affecting wintering areas in South Africa and migration routes.

Swallows were late to arrive this year with the first to return at Spurn on 30th March, with another on 3rd April, when five visited Hummersea. Early May produced the expected movements with a superb spring passage reported from Spurn: 24,509 flew south between 4th April and 16th June with 3360 on 5th May, 2500 on 6th, 2900 on 7th, 2100 on 8th and 3000 on 9th May. Elsewhere 141 flew through Saltburn on 4th May, 375 tracked south at Filey the next day and 520 flew through Flamborough on 9th.

The population appears to have been slowly increasing within the county since 2002, with the Breeding Birds Survey organised by the BTO indicating a 4% increase on the previous year.

Return movement/post-breeding aggregations in August included: 200 at Asenby on 7th, 250 at Buckton on 8th, 780 at Hummersea on 15th, 260 at Flamborough on 17th and Old Moor hosted up to 2000. Southbound passage at Spurn included: 5500 on 20th, 1200 on 21st and 1370 on 25th, when 400 flew through Hunmanby Gap.

Movements continued into September with 4000 at Spurn on the opening day, when 245 were recorded at Flamborough and 1000 at Buckton. There were 500 in the Hummersea area on 12th, 1200 were recorded at Skinningrove the following day and 1145 flew south at Spurn on 19th September. Small groups remained during October with 60 at Skipton SW on 12th. November records included: one at Central Science Laboratory, York on 4th; singles at Brockdale on 9th and Reighton on 10th; two at Filey on 14th; one at Spurn the next day and a single finally at Saltburn on 18th November.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbicum* **A**

Amber list: common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant

BBS 74/204: –7% (+1) 1994–2008, –8% (+1) 2007–08

This trans-Saharan migrant appears to be in long-term decline across Europe, but BBS data suggests an increase in England since the late 1990s. However, 2008 was the third year in a row with decreased occurrences reported in BBS squares in the county.

A single over Manvers Lake, Barnsley on 28th March preceded two at Worsbrough on 29th, followed by singles at Elsecar on 30th and Flamborough on 31st. With the exception of 80 at Potteric Carr on 5th April, low double figure counts were the norm until the end of the month, with poor weather conditions over southern Europe stalling northbound progress. The first large gatherings were 130 at Flamborough on 16th May, 280 at Brough and 350 at Fairburn on 27th May, and a peak of 100 at Old Moor during the month.

At Spurn, spring passage was considered poor with just 1438 south between 23rd April and 16th June; the only treble-figure counts were 122 on 5th, 305 on 29th May and 190 on 2nd June.

There were few significant counts during August, with 70 in the Ewden Valley, Sheffield and 150 near Scarborough on 8th, 150 at Old Moor on 19th, 200 at Flamborough on 21st, 205 north-west over Hunmanby Gap on 25th and 150 near Sheffield on 29th August. In September, three-figure counts included: 326 at Flotmanby, Scarborough on 2nd, 100 at Hebden on 5th, 100 at Hay-a Park GP and 620 south-east at Nosterfield NR on 6th, 300 at Thrybergh CP and 100 at Rother Valley CP on 10th, 250 south at Flasks Lake and 200 at Rodley NR on 13th. Numbers rapidly declined thereafter, with the last being 70 at Wintersett on 4th October, 20 at Nosterfield NR on 18th, and singles at Thrybergh CP on 15th, Jackson's Bay on 22nd and Potteric Carr on 26th October. A pair was still feeding young in the nest at Treeton, Rotherham on 5th October and Spurn claimed the year's final individual on 7th November.

Autumn passage at Spurn was disappointing: only 2275 flew south between 17th June and 7th November. There were just six treble-figure counts: 168 on 1st September, 428 on 8th, 247 on 12th, 207 on 13th, 165 on 17th and 149 on 21st September.

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW *Hirundo daurica* **A** 9,7,1,3,2
Rare passage migrant; 62 previous records (68 birds)

Breeds from NW Africa through the Mediterranean through to the Middle East, with other populations east through India to Japan. Over-shooting migrants thought to be returning from Africa occur from April and post-breeding dispersal can occur into late October.

Two records this year and both at Spurn. The first was widely appreciated feeding around Walker Butts during the late afternoon on 2nd May (PWr *et al.*). It then perched on a telegraph wire opposite the Blue Bell for the next few hours before flying of north, presumably to roost. More typically, the next flew south past the sea-watching hut at 1300hrs on 5th May (AAH *et al.*).



Red-rumped Swallow o
Richard Baines

RICHARD'S PIPIT *Anthus novaeseelandiae* **A** 10,28,10,12,5
Scarce coastal passage migrant in autumn, rare in spring and inland

The migratory *richardi* form of this species breeds in central and eastern Asia, but regularly arrives as a migrant on the east coast from mid-September *en route* to uncertain wintering grounds.

A disappointing year that started well with an early three at Flamborough on 24th September: these included two at South Landing and one in the gorse field (AMA). Flamborough also had the next on 24th October, when a single was discovered near the Fog Station (AMA). One on Long Bank flew off south towards Kilnsea on 28th October (RDHa) and probably the same was in a field off Beacon Lane on 31st October (JWo *et al.*).

TAWNY PIPIT *Anthus campestris* 0,0,0,0,1

Rare passage migrant; 27 previous records

Breeds through the Mediterranean region from Iberia east to South Asia and winters in the Sahel.

An adult was located on the golf course at Flamborough at 0930hrs on 28th May, but its associated flock of pipits and wagtails were soon flushed by a party of golfers (RAB: PC). The first record in the county since a single at Spurn in May 2003; this remains a prized rarity north of Spurn.

OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT *Anthus hodgsoni* 2,1,1,1,3

Rare coastal passage migrant; 23 previous records

European range restricted to North Urals, although widespread from Central Siberia east to Japan, wintering in southern China and in south-east Asia.

It was an excellent year, with three records. Spurn attracted two, the first of which was particularly early: a single showing well and photographed at Middle Camp on 24th September (MJP *et al.*). The next appeared on a more typical date and came in off the sea and landed briefly at Clubley's Field, before flying off towards the saltmarsh on 15th October (RJS *et al.*). Finally, a single was located at the back of private gardens on the Outer Head at Flamborough on 5th November (PC *et al.*).

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis* **A**

Red list and UK BAP species: uncommon breeding summer visitor to north and west. BBS 6/204

A nationally declining migrant from south of the Sahara that breeds throughout most of the Palearctic including Arctic Scandinavia, but rarely in Ireland. Its range has been contracting in England, and has almost disappeared from the east of the county.

One at Winscar Reservoir on 10th April was the first, followed by singles at Sammy's Point on 12th April, Brough, Puffin and Hornsea Mere on 15th April and Guisborough Forest on 19th April.

At Spurn it was considered to be a good spring with a total of 59 bird/days, the highest total in the last ten years. Spurn's first flew south on 20th April, as did 14 others before 2nd June, with peaks of five on 8th May, seven on 27th and eight on 28th May. The East Cleveland cliffs are also a prime spot for observing spring diurnal migration; however, in contrast to Spurn birds more typically flew north-west past the cliffs at Saltburn on four days of the last week of April and first week of May, with a maximum of three on 5th May. Movement at Flamborough was also most evident in this same period, with singles on 27th and 29th April, four on 2nd May, five on 5th and seven singles from 6th-30th May. A single flying north over Swillington Ings on 6th May was the only report from the Leeds area all year.

During the breeding season there were still many reports from the North York Moors and Cleveland Hills, where it was widely reported from Guisborough Forest, Middleton Moor (where four males were singing on 24th May) and the Forestry Commission plantations west of Scarborough, where it is still regarded as common.

In the Pennine uplands and valleys of West and North Yorkshire there were three singing males at Brimham Rocks on 6th June and two singing males at Guisecliffe on 20th June. In Wharfedale there has been a slow but steady reduction in the number of sites where it has been recorded: from 14 in 2005 through 13 and 11 in the past two years, to nine this year. A similar decline has been noted in Calderdale, where it is now regarded as very uncommon.

In the Southern Pennines three pairs were present on Broomhead Moor on 2nd May, four pairs in the Ewden Valley, 11 (including six singing males) noted at Wharnciffe on 10th May, five pairs at Langsett, four males at Agdenside and three pairs at Blacka Moor. Birds were seen carrying food from late May to late July near Langsett, raising at least two broods.

The lowland heaths of Thorne and Hatfield Moors and Skipworth Common still support good numbers, although reports suggest a general decline in many other parts of lowland Yorkshire.

The first coastal migrant headed south on 3rd August at Spurn. Here, as at Flamborough, it was considered to be good autumn with a respectable bird/day total of 145, the highest autumn total for more than a decade. Visible passage over Spurn produced 41 birds flying south between 7th August and 21st September. At Spurn up to three were logged on several days in August, with a maximum of four at Sammy's Point on 30th August. Fall conditions on 6th September induced the arrival of 11 at South Gare and three at both Flamborough and Spurn. Two were at Filey on 7th and 11th September. However, the bulk arrived in mid-September when maxima included: 14 at Spurn and four at Flamborough on 12th; three at Ravenscar on 14th; 21 at Spurn on 15th with 14 there on 16th and 19 at Spurn on 17th; finally two were at Flamborough and a single at Filey on 25th September.

Elsewhere, five flew south-west over Redmires on 10th August, two flew south over Hunmanby Gap on 11th August, two headed over Nosterfield NR and two were ringed at Wintersett Res on 16th August, four passed south-west over Redmires on 20th August, with two at Scammonden on 23rd August. During September notable records included: singles at Roche Abbey on 16th September and Wharnciffe on 19th and one south-west over Redmires on 27th September. There were no more records until a very late single at Spurn on 2nd November.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis* **A**
Amber list: common breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor
BBS 94/204: -22% (-10) 1994-2008, +45% (-1) 2007-08

There has been a moderate long-term national decline, and although in the county its strongholds remain on the moors, loss of marginal habitat may be contributing to local decline, and it is now of conservation concern. BBS results show an increase for the last two years.

Although many local bird reports describe this species as being resident there were very few reports during the early months, with maxima including: 20 at Silverwood Pit on 2nd January, 75 at Beal Carrs on 6th January, 15 at Blackmoorfoot on 2nd February, 20 on the upland fringe at Ughill and 40 at Nosterfield NR both on 9th February. Birds seem to be increasingly overwintering in the Shelley/Shepley area, with 12 on 9th January and 20 on 7th February. In coastal areas only one or two were reported during January and February.

Spring migration was evident from late February and early March. Inland, peak numbers included 70 north over Blackmoorfoot Res on 6th March, 100 in Worsborough Valley and 80 at Rother Valley CP both on 23rd March, 160 grounded in poor weather at Winterset Res on 25th March, 170 north-west over Scout Dike on 27th March and 50 north-west over Agdenside, Sheffield on 16th April.

In coastal areas spring passage at Spurn included: 467 south and 361 coming in off the sea and continuing north-west between 24th February and 9th May. Here the most significant influxes occurred on 15th March, when 112 were counted coming in off the sea and 80 grounded, whilst on 30th March 125 flew south and on 4th April 350 were in The Triangle. Elsewhere, 423 flew north at Hunt Cliff, near Whitby on 29th March, 330 per hour passed Boulby on 3rd April, with a further 200 west over Whitby on 4th April. A few were still on the move in late April, with 20 flying past Hummersea on 26th. It is interesting to speculate about the destination of these late migrants, given that the first returning to breeding grounds in the Pennines appeared from mid-February, with the first at Tarn Moss on 18th February. Most pairs appeared to have re-established territories by mid/late March, with 80 on Ilkley Moor on 30th March.

As usual, breeding was widespread in the uplands although several lowland sites also held substantial breeding populations. At Wharnccliffe in Sheffield, 154 were present on 2nd April, including 32 singing males, whilst Atlas work in the tetrad square covering Upper and Lower Windleden Res produced 112 pairs on 5th June. Elsewhere 133 were counted at Pen-y-Ghent on 30th June. Reports suggest it was an average or below breeding season. Breeding populations were inevitably much lower in the lowlands and in coastal areas with 19 pairs breeding at Fairburn and 18 pairs at Spurn, with many young birds seen. Recently fledged young were in Sheffield as late as 28th August when the return migration was already well underway.

There were few reports of post-breeding flocks, although 356 at Nosterfield Nature Reserve on 13th August was a noteworthy record. Autumn migration was evident from 24th August with extraordinary counts from Spurn where a total of 46,488 flew south between 24th August and 29th November, the bulk of which were typically in mid-September. The highs were 1441 on 8th September, 2098 on 9th, 5000 on 12th, an impressive 16,750 on 13th, 5420 on 19th, 1250 on 20th, 4800 on 21st and 1070 on 28th September. Elsewhere, smaller maxima included: 683 south at Flamborough on 12th September, 1116 south-east over Speeton on 16th, 1066 over Speeton on 20th (when 1115 flew south in five hours over Winterset Res) and 1455 south-east over Speeton on 21st September, when 1661 also flew south over Oxenhope and 756 headed south at Old Moor.

A total of 3840 flew south/south-west over Thornton Moor, considerably less than in recent years. After an October maxima of 605 south at Spurn on 13th the number of migrants tailed off rapidly and counts were mainly restricted to double figures, with 80 at Blackmoorfoot on 8th and 60 on 14th October. Forty-four birds were colour-ringed at Kex Gill during September.

The last report from the Malham area was of a single at Capon Hall on 1st November. The only significant flock reported in November was 25 at Knostrop on 23rd November. Some movement continued into December with 40 at Scalby Lodge on 5th and ten at Blackmoorfoot on the upland fringe on 21st December. Small numbers were overwintering around Harrogate and Wilthorpe Marsh in Barnsley still held 22 on 29th December.

An interesting record was of an Icelandic ringed individual controlled on 16th September at Spurn; it was only the second such for Spurn and the UK.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus* **A**
Fairly common coastal resident, passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce inland
Resident around rocky coastlines of Britain, Ireland and northern France.

It is very difficult to disentangle the movements and wintering populations of Fenno-Scandinavian birds, of the race *A.p.littoralis*, from the resident populations of the nominate race *petrosus*. Ringing recoveries suggest that populations of the race *petrosus* are generally resident, although there is evidence of local dispersive movements especially in populations in the north of the range (Wernham *et al.*, 2002). It is likely that the majority noted inland/on visible migration, refer to the race *littoralis*.

There were very few reports in January and February, although 15 at Skinningrove on 12th January and 20 at Flamborough on 31st January were average for the time of year. It is interesting to speculate whether these are resident *petrosus* or *littoralis*. Elsewhere, one flew south at Spurn on 1st January and a single was present on four days mid-month. Up to two were on the saltmarsh on four dates in February.

The number of sightings increased during March with up to six along Marine Drive, Scarborough and three at both Saltburn and South Gare. At Spurn, spring passage produced 34 south and 10 in off the sea and continued north between 25th February and 28th April, with a high of five on 11th March. Of four present at Spurn on 23rd March, at least one was *littoralis*. On the same date at least two *littoralis* were present at Beacon Ponds, remaining until 25th March. Elsewhere, reports of *littoralis* included one at Old Moor on 16th March, with three at Cowbar on 28th March and one at Filey Dams on 8th/9th April. The only report from Flamborough was of a single on 29th April. This latter report compares with up to ten reported annually in spring only ten years ago.

Inland reports were few and far between, with singles at both Southfield Res and Harden on 28th February, Cortonwood Lake, Brampton Bierlow on 6th March, Dewsbury SF on 8th March, Winterset on 15th, 21st/22nd March (the latter *littoralis*) and Rother Valley CP on 23rd March.

Breeding reports were received from Scarborough, where two pairs along Marine Drive reared two broods and at Filey Brigg, where one pair also successfully raised young. Nine were present at the latter locality on 10th May. Elsewhere, pairs were noted at Bempton Cliffs and Flamborough Head throughout the breeding season, but without any assessment of breeding numbers. An interesting record was of one at Sammy's Point on 19th July. Up to three birds were reported from Staithes in August.

The first of the autumn was one at Spurn on 8th September, after which small numbers were seen in the saltmarsh regularly to the year end. Passage produced 255 south, with highs in October of 20 on 11th, 13th and 22nd, and 22 on 18th. During this period up to four were reported from South Gare, one flew south over Speeton on 22nd October and one was at Filey Dams on 23rd October. Counts at Flamborough of 17 on 24th October and 16 on 18th November may have included a few migrants, but may also have reflected the strength of the resident population.

Inland, the first of the autumn was one at Scaling Dam on 9th September, followed by one east over Carlton Marsh on 16th September and singles at Winterset on 28th September, 1st and 2nd October, two on 6th October, followed by another single there on 16th and 17th October. Elsewhere, singles flew south-west over Thornton Moor and Rother Valley CP on 7th October, Blakeley Res on 9th October, Thrybergh CP on 10th October, Nosterfield NR and Eccup Res on 11th and 24th October and Holme Moss on 15th October. In the latter half of October there were singles: west over Old Moor on 19th October, Southfield Res on 21st October, north-west over Oxenhope and one at Scaling Dam both on 26th October, Old Moor from 30th October to 1st November, Dinnington Colliery Tip also on 1st November and Staveley NR on 16th November. Three were on the main lake at St Aidan's on 1st November.

Towards the end of the year small numbers were reported from traditional sites, including seven around Carr Naze, Filey on 22nd December, up to four at Scarborough, three at Whitby and smaller numbers from Sandsend and Hawsker and Ness Point.

WATER PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta* **A** 36,28,39,31,55

Amber list: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant from Europe

This species breeds in the mountains of southern Europe, dispersing northwards to winter.

The traditional stronghold is Blacktoft Sands where birds spent much time feeding in cut reed areas. This year did not disappoint with record-breaking numbers peaking at 31 birds on 16th January (MJP: PCS), thereafter declining to 14 on 22nd January, five on 22nd February, three on 16th March and two on 3rd April.

Individuals overwintering from the previous year included the single at Catterton (first seen on 27th November 2007) which was last recorded on 21st January and the Cromer Point individual (first seen on 2nd November 2007) present until 3rd April, when it was showing signs of breeding plumage. Another long stayer remained at Cononley and Snaygill Ings from 10th February until 12th April, when it had moulted into breeding plumage; presumably this same bird was first reported on 21st October 2007 and was last seen on 28th December 2007. A single continued to overwinter at Fairburn Ings where it was seen sporadically through January and February, with fewer sightings in March. Similarly, a single at Skipton and first reported on 27th October 2007 was presumably the same observed on and off from 5th January-16th February.

Elsewhere, singles were reported from Scaling Dam from 2nd-8th January, Brough Airfield on 12th January, Coatham Marsh from 20th January until at least 2nd March, Thorne Moors on 10th February, two at Dewsbury SF on 19th March, Nosterfield NR on 22nd March, Paull Holme Strays on 26th and the Calder Wetlands on 28th/29th March. At Spurn one in breeding plumage was seen on several occasions on 13th May.

The first to return was a single at Whitton Sands on 11th October followed by one at Blacktoft Sands on 21st October. More typically the main influx occurred in early November, with singles at St Aidan's on 1st November, Blacktoft Sands on 3rd November; numbers then increased there to two on 11th November and six on 12th, four on 7th December and two on 14th December. During this period singles were also recorded at Broomhill Flash and Old Moor on 24th and 26th November respectively. Elsewhere, a single returned to Skipton on 21st November and remained until at least 29th December, with two birds on 10th December. Another single appeared at Fairburn Ings from 23rd November, where it was seen intermittently until the year end. Nearby, one visited Swillington Ings on 30th/31st December.

CITRINE WAGTAIL *Motacilla citreola* A 0,0,0,0,1
Vagrant; three previous records

A female was found in the Walker Butts area of Spurn early in the morning on 10th May (NP: RSCa *et al.*); it was only the fourth record for Yorkshire and, remarkably, given that 88% have been in autumn, the second spring record (Slack, 2009). Unfortunately, it was very flighty and soon flew over to the Borrow Pit where it spent a short time before moving into the field north of there. It was last seen heading south with a Yellow Wagtail at 0805hrs. Surprisingly this represented the first for Spurn; with the previous records from Flamborough and two from Filey, which had the last in September 2003.



Citrine Wagtail ◦
Ray Scally

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava* A
Red list and UK BAP subspecies (*flavissima*): uncommon and decreasing breeding summer visitor/passage migrant. BBS 20/204

The British race *flavissima* winters in West Africa and is decreasing, probably due to changes in agricultural practices.

The situation continues to deteriorate, especially in the uplands and very few were reported from the Halifax and Leeds areas.

Typically, the first to return was in the first week of April with a single at Hornsea Mere on 5th April followed by one north over Rother Valley CP and a male at Pugney's CP the following day and a single at Sammy's Point on 7th April. Thereafter, small numbers were reported daily at key sites in April and May, with maxima including 20 at Spurn on 24th and 17 on 28th April. Elsewhere numbers peaked on the latter date with 26 at Flamborough and 25 at Scarborough, although 35 were at Grimston on 30th April.

Visible migration counts at Spurn were recorded as 'flavas' and followed similar patterns to recent years, although numbers were slightly down. A total of 336 flew south between 12th April and 7th June, with the bulk of passage in late April and early May. High counts included: 44 on 25th April, 24 on 26th and 27th, a best of 71 on 28th April; and 26 on 5th May. Inland reports typically involved smaller numbers with maxima of 11 at Thrybergh CP on 17th April and 14 at Silverwood Tip, Rotherham on 14th May.

The return to upland breeding grounds occurred from late April, with the first reported near Capon Hall, Malham on 25th April. Although remembered as a characteristic species of the Dales, with pairs breeding in many of the hay meadows, such habitat has given way to silage, which is being cut early; a factor that may be contributing to the 47% reduction in the Wharfedale breeding population between 1994 and 2007. However, there was a single breeding record in mid-Wharfedale; the first such since 1999. The decline continued around Malham with only one pair between Low Trenhouse and Tarn Outflow (three pairs typical) and only two pairs reported from the Tennant Ghyll area. If this decline continues it will soon cease to breed in the area.

Although breeding numbers have declined in recent years, it is certainly under-recorded with one or two pairs in cereal, potato and pea fields at Staveley NR, Goldsborough, Arkendale, Kirklington, Marton-le-Moor and near Melmerby. A pair bred at Gallows Hill NR, Bradford which constituted the first since 2002. A pair probably bred at Edderthorpe, but there were very few reports from the Lower Aire Valley and West Yorkshire. Perhaps the current stronghold is focused in arable fields within the Humberhead Levels; for example several pairs bred around Thorne and Hatfield Moors. On the coastal lowlands several pairs also bred in fields between Kilnsea and Easington and at least 14 pairs were present in the north-east Wolds from Flamborough north to Hunmanby. Elsewhere, one or two pairs were reported from Spurn area, Blacktoft, North Cave Wetlands, Pulfin Bog and around Scarborough, although breeding was not reported in Cleveland south of the Tees. Reports of post-breeding parties were scarce and largely restricted to family parties and the last report from the uplands came at Malham on 23rd July.

Return movement was evident from 1st August in Sheffield; at Blacktoft numbers built to a maximum of 50 on 18th August, declining to 15 by 2nd September, whilst peak counts at Spurn were later with maxima of 26 on 1st and 27 on 8th September. A total of 304 flew south over Spurn between 25th June and 1st October. Elsewhere, maxima included 21 at Flamborough on 25th September and 16 at Southfield Res on 21st August. Late birds included one south-west over Rother Valley CP on 6th October, a straggler at Flamborough from 1st-6th November (only the second ever November record there) and a single at Thorpe Marsh Mere on 12th November.

Blue-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima* A
Passage migrant

Breeds in western continental Europe from Southern Scandinavia south to Northern Iberia and east to the Balkans.

It was a good year with up to 14 recorded from the east of the county. The first appeared at North Cave Wetlands on 20th April, closely followed by a female-type at Spurn the next day and a male at Long Bank Marsh, Easington on 24th and 28th April and another male at Watton on 24th. A small influx occurred in late April, with another two at Spurn and one at Flamborough on 26th April (until 27th). A female-type at Hornsea on 27th remained until 30th April. A single was located amongst a flock of 25 '*flava*' wagtails at Scalby Lodge Pond, Scarborough on 28th. On 30th April a male 'channel wagtail' was in a flock of 35+ '*flava*' wagtails at Grimston. May records were all focused on the Spurn area: a male on 5th May was followed by a female-type on 14th May, with a male nearby at Long Bank Marsh the following day and lastly, a male at Spurn on 27th May.

Grey-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava thunbergi* A 2,1,3,1,13
Rare migrant

Breeds in central and northern Scandinavia west to northern Siberia.

It was an excellent year, with the majority occurring in May, including nine males at Spurn. There was a small influx on 3rd May with singles at North Landing, Flamborough (AMA), Spurn (JHe) and Scalby Lodge (NWA: SW *et al.*); the latter two remained until 4th May. Another bird flew south over Spurn on 5th May (JG: GCT) and one appeared near Old Fall, Flamborough on 7th May (KB). The next male showed briefly on the Borrow Pit, Spurn on 10th May (TMc). Three came in off the sea and ranged between the Point and the Lighthouse on 27th and 28th May, with another at the Point also on 28th (GED *et al.*). Singles also made landfall at Kilnsea on 29th May and in the Scrape Field, Spurn the following day (MBre). Spring's last record related to a male at Scalby Lodge Pond on 3rd June (MF).

A probable male Grey-headed hybrid was trapped and ringed at the Point at Spurn on 2nd June (PCo *et al.*).

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea* **A**
Amber list: uncommon resident in north and west; scarce passage migrant. BBS 18/204
Favours fast-flowing watercourses, and appears to be increasing in the north-west, but there are also more reports from lowland areas where it increasingly breeds. Breeding in the mountains of the Palearctic, continental birds migrate south and may account for some of our coastal records.

There were numerous reports from a variety of locations throughout, with a trend to more reports from the lowlands and city centres including Barnsley, Huddersfield and Sheffield. At Harrogate a single even became a regular garden visitor feeding on oatcakes.

Several upland breeding sites appear to be abandoned in the winter, with the first in mid-Wharfedale not recorded until 25th February at Conistone Bridge.

Small numbers of spring migrants were noted in March and April including 18 south at Spurn from 15th March to 4th June. Flamborough recorded only six, including four on 1st April. Inland eight were reported from Ingleton on 31st March and six birds were present in Hebden during April (as in 2007).

Breeding reports were concentrated in the upland fringe and foothills of the Pennines and North Yorkshire Moors. In Wharfedale several broods were reported, with adults feeding young from 13th May to 4th August. Three pairs bred at Old Moor; more unusually pairs bred in Sheffield City Centre and Primrose Valley, Filey for the first time.

A small post-breeding dispersal was evident from June onwards with singles at coastal sites in June and July. Elsewhere post-breeding flocks/family parties included seven at Worsborough Res on 23rd July.

The main movement was concentrated from August onwards, increasing towards the end of the month and peaking in early-mid September. A total of 127 flew south at Spurn up to 12th November, with maxima of 16 on 12th, 15 on 13th and 12 on 17th September. This same period produced ten at Wentworth Pig Farm on 17th September, whilst eight flew south-west at Oxenhope, Bradford and four flew south at both Flamborough and Hunt Cliff, all on 14th September.

Significant aggregations late on included eight at Skipton STW on 5th October and six at Flamborough on 12th October.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba yarrellii* **A**
Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor
BBS 102/204: -22% (+6) 1994-2008, 16% (-3) 2007-08

The population in the county has been fairly stable or slightly declining, although with some increase noted in North Yorkshire. The British race *M. a. yarrellii* is mostly resident, but some move south.

Numbers in coastal and upland areas were typically very low during January and February. In contrast, many inland lowland and urban areas recorded their highest counts, either at communal roosts or in feeding flocks, often associated with sewage treatment works. Maxima during the early months included: 50 at Snaygill Ings and 45 in a roost at the Scarborough WTW both on 1st January, 100 at Cononley Ings on 3rd January and up to 50 on several dates in January at Fairburn Ings. Maxima increased in February with up to 200 roosting in Keighley town centre, 110 along the River Aire between Skipton and Cononley on 3rd February, whilst 100 roosted above a petrol station at Canklow, Rotherham on 13th February and similar numbers fed at Dowley WTW and Cononley Ings on 23rd February. In contrast, no more than three were logged at Spurn during January and February.

Spring migration was evident from mid-February onwards with 264 flying south over Spurn between 17th February and 10th May. Passage peaked in late March and early April, when highs included 24 on 29th, 34 on 30th March; 29 on 1st and 18 on 4th April. Elsewhere, 40 at Winterset on 10th March rose to 103 on 17th and a maximum of 114 on 25th March. Other peak counts included: 60 at Broomhill Flash on 17th March, 93 at Rother Valley CP on 23rd March and 80 at both Pugney's CP on 22nd and Snaygill Ings on 23rd March. Towards the end of the month numbers declined, although there was some evidence of continued passage throughout April and early May including: 20 at Ravenscar on 1st April, 43 Flamborough on 3rd, 44 at Ingbirchworth on 16th and 17 at Skinningrove on 26th April. It is interesting to speculate about the origin of flocks of 15 at Scalby Lodge on 14th May and a roost of 13 at Primrose Valley on 23rd May. Birds started to return to their traditional upland breeding grounds at Malham by early March and were widespread by mid-April.

Several post-breeding flocks were reported including: 35 at Yeadon Tarn on 13th June, a peak of 40 at Nosterfield NR on 6th July, 30 at Edderthorpe Flash on 10th July increasing to 45 on 12th, 31 at Cayton and Flixton Carrs on 5th August and 32 on the Addingham GC, Wharfedale on 11th August.

Autumn migration was evident from mid-July although passage was poor at Spurn: only 235 flew south between 9th July and 8th November, with highs of just 15 on 28th September and 17 on 13th October. Elsewhere, the story seemed to be repeated with maxima of: 46 at Cayton and Flixton Carrs on 15th September, 125 at

Flamborough on 25th September, 80 roosting at Meadowhall on 26th September, 80 at Snaygill and Cononley Ings on 2nd October, 23 at Winterset on 3rd October, whilst 50 were present at Lemonroyd WTW on 4th October and 43 flew south at Oxenhope on 6th October. During this period the highest count was reported from a roost at Farnham GP with 400-500 going to roost on 10th September and an estimated 200 on 24th September and 400 on 2nd October. Malham's last was recorded on 5th October.

Peak numbers at the year end involved 60 roosting at Sand Hutton on 18th November, 100 feeding at Knostrop WTW, Leeds on 23rd November and 60 at Cudworth on 17th December. The largest roost established during December was in Cambridge Street, Harrogate which held up to 300.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba* **A**
Passage migrant

Breeds in Iceland and northern Europe and winters in Africa.

The first appeared at Hornsea Mere on 16th March with another at Winterset CP the next day, followed by singles there on 24th/25th March and 2nd, 6th and 14th April. Elsewhere, one was in the fields between Easington and Kilnsea on 22nd March, with three at Rother Valley CP and a single at Flamborough on 23rd March. The following day singles visited Naburn and Swillington Ings, whilst three at Hornsea Mere remained until 25th March.

At Flamborough, 64 bird/days were recorded on 23 dates up to 13th May with four or more on seven April dates and seven on 16th, 22nd and 23rd April; this constituted the second best spring showing on the headland. Similarly Spurn had an excellent spring, with three flying south on 1st April, followed by up to four almost daily in April and a new spring maximum of eight on 19th April. Singles were recorded on ten dates in May, plus three on 10th and two on 28th and one on 1st June, The spring bird/day total of 65 was impressive and remarkably similar to Flamborough.

Elsewhere, early arrivals included singles at Dewsbury STW on 28th March and Filey on 29th and 31st March, when three were at Ingbirchworth Res and one was at Cromer Point. These were followed by seven at Scalby Lodge on 1st April, where one or two continued to be reported until 3rd May. Other records included: three at Ravenscar and a single at Winterset on 2nd April, further singles at Whitby on 4th April, Filey on 7th, Cononley Ings and Calder Wetlands on 12th, five at Hornsea Mere on 13th, an excellent ten at Scaling Dam on 17th April, four at Flasks Lake, Harrogate on 20th April, two at Gouthwaite on 24th April, two at Nosterfield on 27th and one at Edderthorpe on 30th April.

There were sixteen records from Old Moor, with a best of eight on 18th April. Spring's last were singles at Edderthorpe Flash on 30th April and Dewsbury STW on 2nd May.

Very few were confirmed during the autumn with one at Spurn on 7th September, three at Flamborough on 8th and one on 14th September.

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus* **A**
Irruptive late autumn and winter visitor, usually uncommon

Breeds from northern Scandinavia eastwards through the coniferous zone, including North America.

In the early part of the year, there were up to four at Nunthorpe from 8th-18th January and 11 at nearby Coulby Newham on 22nd/23rd January. Sixty were off Roundhay Road, Leeds on 2nd January, 30 were at Horsforth on 4th/5th January. Additional records early on included: a single on Cookridge Lane, Leeds on 5th January, Ogden Water on 8th, six at Strensall on 19th (one remaining to 14th February). Three were at Wilberfoss on 22nd January, one at Batley on 22nd/23rd January, three on 25th (two remaining to 5th February), two at Handsworth from 23rd/27th, up to four birds at Gildersome from 25th-28th January, with two in Sheffield on 27th. Numbers then tailed off dramatically; two were in Birstall on 2nd February, seven at Wortley on 8th, one at Harrogate and two in Huddersfield on 27th. Finally there were six in Pickering from 11th-15th March and four at Bingley from 17th March to 20th April.

Autumn arrivals began on 28th October with singles at Bempton Cliffs, Flamborough, Camblesforth and Filey (three). A single flew over York on 29th before another arrival took place on 31st October with: eight at Flamborough, six at Spurn, five at Buckton, threes at South Gare, Sunk Island and Flaxfleet and singles at Scarborough, Reighton Sands, Filey and Easington.

November opened with one at Buckton, seven at Spurn and 21 at Staveley NR on 1st November. The following day produced a single at Bempton, three at Spurn and two at Scout Dike Res. Two had reached the far west of the county at High Bentham on 3rd when four were at Spurn. Numbers slowly began to increase on 4th with: six at Flamborough, seven at both Lingham Lake and Melbourne, five at Easington and 13 at Spurn. On 5th November there were 31 at Spurn and 13 at Filey, with singles at Castle Hill and two at Robin Hood's Bay; inland there were singles at Thorne and Upper Poppleton. A further influx was evident on 6th November when there were: five at Crook Ness and Saltwick Nab, 26 at Filey, ten at Easington, 33 at Flamborough, 24 at Spurn and 55

at South Gare. With persistent northerlies the arrival continued unabated on 7th with: 17 at Easington, ten at Buckton, 12 at Halifax, 21 at Lingham, 25 at Scalby and 35 at Spurn; the latter a site record count. Seven were at Alwoodley on 9th with five at Eccup Res, 17 in Halifax, 10 at Kirkbymoorside and two at Pulfin, with a flock of 150 congregating at Kirklevington on 10th.

The conurbations started to witness gathering flocks as birds penetrated further inland. In Halifax 17 on 9th November increased to 28 on 17th and 50 on 23rd; 60 were present by 27th November, before numbers reduced to 20 by 1st December. Likewise in Hull 20 arrived at Murfleet Lane on 10th and remained until 29th, with maximum counts of 70 on 12th and 80 on 21st and 25th. Two at Crosspool, Sheffield from 11th–14th were forerunners to 27 on 19th, 30 on 25th and 40 on 30th November reducing to 21 by 4th December.

Four gathered in Burley-in-Wharfedale on 11th November, when six were at Ilkley and a single was in Goole; the following day there were ten in Hessle and a single at Wentworth Lake. Hemlington attracted 65 on 13th which later increased to 120 on 17th, with 190 in Middlesbrough on 19th November. The flock at Ilkley increased to 32 on 13th and subsequent reports included a single at Ainderby Steeple on 15th and the following day 16 were at Sigglesthorne, two at Burton-in-Lonsdale and 85 roosted at Timble Ings. Small numbers continued to arrive at inland sites with two at CSL, York on 17th, a single at Worsbrough on 18th and one at Saltaire and nine at Brompton-on-Swale on 19th. Two were at Wombwell Ings and a single at Redmires on 22nd, with singles at Old Moor and Thornton-in-Craven, 15 at Riddlesden and two at Winterset on 23rd. Five were at Dewsbury, 25 at Huddersfield and a single at Potteric Carr on 24th with four at the latter site on 27th. Fifteen appeared at Rudland on 26th, with a single at Settle and three at Thornton-in-Craven (until 27th) the same day. Forty were in Bramley on 28th/29th with additional flocks on 29th including 17 in Fairburn Village, 50 at Great Broughton and 35 at Riddlesden. At the end of November there were 20 at Eccup Res and 40 in Leeds.

At the start of December, Farnham GP recorded only its second and third records in over 40 years, with 14 on 2nd December and eight on 27th. A flock of 50 at Skipton on 3rd December increased to 55 on 9th reducing to 10 on 10th. A single visited Thorne on 5th December, when 20 were at Leeds, and another single graced North Ferriby on 6th when a party of six visited Burley in Wharfedale. On 7th December ten appeared at Spurn and a single made a brief stop at Tophill Low, while the next day there were 105 at Hillsborough. Four were at Rawcliffe on 9th when three were at East Keswick, four at both Potteric Carr and Bishop Monkton and 12 in Cottingham. Six visited Millington Woods on 11th, when singles were at Pickering and Strensall. Most flocks were now focused on city centres with 95 at Leeds and 48 at Sheffield on 12th and the following day produced 20 at Thirsk Race Course, 32 still at Skipton, 60 at Sheffield and 20 at Heckmondwike. On 14th December there were 14 at Bradford University, two at Pocklington, 21 at Leeds and four at Honley, but an impressive 174 were in Bradford the following day. A single visited Bridlington on 16th with further records on the same day at Garton (a single), four at Harrogate, five at Settle, six at Old Moor and 27 at Strensall. Nine were at Cottingham on 17th with 30 still at Skipton, 12 at Harrogate, 35 at Crossgates, Leeds and 16 remaining at Thirsk Race Course. Numbers continued to gravitate to the south-west of the county in the latter half of December with a peak of 250 in Hunslet on 19th December, with 230 still present on 27th. Away from the major concentrations, 30 were in the Hessle area during the final week. On 20th December 150 congregated in Huddersfield and 70 were in Leeds. Halifax attracted a flock of 50 on 27th, while the following day 100 were in Ilkley and 300 gathered in the Staples area of Sheffield.

DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus* A
Uncommon resident on higher ground in north and west. BBS 5/204in
Nationally stable population of the race *gularis*.

In South Yorkshire, breeding was confirmed in the Little Don Valley with three occupied territories, with juveniles on the River Don and at Oxspring in late May. Further north it was present on the River Colne throughout the year and reported from both high and low ground in the Harrogate/Ripon areas. Populations in the Dales appear to be flourishing, although recent high summer river levels will undoubtedly have had a deleterious effect. The River Wharfe up to Littondale continues to maintain a healthy population, although there were fewer records from the Washburn Valley and no evidence of breeding. A pair again bred at Pool Paper Mills on the Wharfe and on several smaller tributaries, including Troller's Ghyll, Hebden and Cam Gill, Kettlewell; juveniles were noted at Linton and Fleet Moss.

In the north-east of the county the streams between Hutton Village and Charltons, which converge to form Skelton Beck, support a small population. Breeding occurred in Saltburn Valley Gardens, where at least one pair bred successfully and another was singing in November at Upleatham, a former breeding territory.

Away from here, the only other was on the River Leven at Weary Bank on 17th February. Although under-recorded in the Scarborough area, two were singing at Low North Camp on 12th May and pairs again noted regularly at both Wrench Green and Hilla Green. Unusually a single visited Scalby Mills on 31st August and 4th September.

At Blackmoorfoot Res, there were isolated records of two in March and November and a single in December. Further illustrating that movements can occur, one ringed as an adult at Malin Bridge, Sheffield in 2005 was controlled 35km away and three years later at Goyt's Clough, Derbyshire.

Black-bellied Dipper *Cinclus c. cinclus/aquaticus* A 0,0,0,1,0
Vagrant; 13 previous records
The individual first noted on 24th November 2007 at Watton, near Tophill Low was refound on 11th February and remained in residence until 29th March.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes* A
Abundant resident; passage migrant in small numbers
BBS 190/204: +54% (+16) increase 1994–2008, +2% (–1) 2007–08

After a harsher winter, unsurprisingly the increase in numbers noted since 1994 slowed this year; nevertheless, this remains the county's most widespread BBS species.

Although any movement in spring went undetected, there was an appreciable increase at Spurn in the autumn, coinciding with a fall of Scandinavian migrants: 49 on 31st October increased to a remarkable 75 on 4th November, a record day count for the Observatory.

Breeding surveys were undertaken at a number of disparate sites and included the following tallies of singing males: 69 at Wharnccliffe Heath; 45 at Beeley Wood, Sheffield; 42 at Brierley Common, Barnsley; 35 at Blacktoft Sands and 32 at Gledhow Valley, Leeds. At Fairburn Ings, 48 pairs were recorded breeding, a negligible decrease from the previous year; conversely at Spurn, there was a slight increase with 18 males on territory.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis* A
Amber list and UK BAP species: abundant resident; passage migrant
BBS 132/204: +4% (+15) 1994–2008, +5% (–6) 2007–08

The very sedentary British race *occidentalis* appeared to show some recovery for the second year in a row after a period of decline in the county since 2000. Nominate *modularis* from Fennoscandia and north-east Europe occur on migration on the coast. Probably under-recorded in BBS surveys.

Some spring movement was evident on the coast, with 14 at Flamborough on 25th March and up to 50 at Spurn two days later.

During the breeding season, counts of 23 singing males were at Spurn (where the majority of pairs were double-brooded) and 23 pairs were recorded breeding at Fairburn Ings, with 34 birds present at Tophill Low on 1st June.

Autumn numbers were almost non-existent: 13 at Scarborough on 13th September were presumed to include some migrants and 20 at Filey on 25th September were also indicative of passage.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula* A
Common to abundant resident; passage migrant and winter visitor
BBS 155/204: +57% (+24) 1994–2008, –7% (+8) 2007–08

The resident and largely sedentary British race *melophilus* has been increasing in the county since 2002. Falls of the nominate race *rubecula* occur on the east coast, particularly in October, and these are probably of Fennoscandian and south Baltic origin. They pass through to wintering grounds further south.

Outside the breeding season notable counts included 25 in the Rivelin Valley, Sheffield on 1st January and 25 in Listerdale Wood, increasing to 39 there in February. A small spring passage included ten at Castle Hill, Scarborough on 31st March. Higher counts were logged in the second half of April, including ten at Filey on 22nd. However, counts at Spurn were more significant: 35 on 21st, 46 on 22nd and 51 on 23rd April.

Breeding records included: 31 pairs at Fairburn Ings, 30 singing males at Gledhow Valley on 13th May and 33 singing males at Wharnccliffe on 15th May.

Autumn passage was more pronounced: 30 were at South Gare on 6th September, with 48 well inland at Bretton Park on 25th September, followed by 25 on Castle Hill, Scarborough on 26th September. A notable influx occurred during a fall on 6th November and counts included 70 at Filey, 54 at Flamborough and 20 at Scarborough.



Wren
Ray Scally

THRUSH NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia Luscinia* **A** 0,0,1,0,2
Vagrant; 11 previous records
Typically both records came from Spurn and occurred during a fantastic spell at the end of May. The first sang from deep cover between the Crown & Anchor car park and Kew Villa on 28th May; only seen briefly, it was last heard singing in the early afternoon (DHo: JTH *et al.*). The other was singing at Chalk Bank early morning on 29th May and was later trapped and released there (AAH: GED *et al.*). Although there was a single at Spurn in August 2006, these were the first spring records since one there in May 2002.
A nightingale sp. that flew over the Canal bank at Spurn on 1st June was probably this species.

NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia megarhynchos* **A** 0,1,1,1,2 *
Amber list: rare breeding summer visitor in the south and rare passage migrant
*** Running totals refer only to migrants**
Another disappointing year; the population on Thorne Moors appears to be only just clinging on with records on two dates: Durham’s Garden on 7th May and Will Pits on 21st May.
There were two coastal migrants in spring: one photographed at Spurn Point on 21st April (MFI) and another in occasional song was present at Old Fall Plantation, Flamborough from 27th–29th May (PC: PAL: DIMW *et al.*).
In autumn, a nightingale sp. located near post 67 at Spurn on 15th September was presumed to be *L. megarhynchos* rather than *L. luscinia*.

BLUETHROAT *Luscinia svecica* **A** 7,1,2,6,8
Scarce passage migrant; occasional rare breeding species
The species breeds across the Palaearctic from Spain to Siberia. The red–spotted race *svecica* breeds north of the Baltic to Alaska, and has bred in Scotland. The white–spotted forms *cyaneola* and *namnetum* breed from Spain to the Baltic States and this form has bred in the county, most recently at Thorne Moors.
The first was trapped and ringed in the Top Scrub at Filey on 14th May (CPH *et al.*). The second half of May then provided a good series of records, although all but the first were at Spurn. A female was discovered at Thornton Moor Res on 23rd May and represented only the second record for the Bradford area (KM: RHP: BV *et al.*). At Spurn a male was on the Canal Bank on 24th (JWa); a male was between posts 49 and 52 on 27th (GED *et al.*); and finally, female–types were at post 21 (DH) and the Potato Fields on 28th May.
A very elusive first–winter female remained at Snaygill Ings from 27th September to 5th October (RC *et al.*); it was the second record for the area, following a white–spotted male present along the river at Flosh, Cononley on 1st April 1992. The only other autumn record related to an immature at Thornwick on 1st November; the latest ever for the Head and remarkably the first at Flamborough since one on 5th September 1998 (AMa *et al.*).

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros* **A**
Amber list: rare breeder; uncommon passage migrant; rare winter visitor
Breeds from North Africa to southern Scandinavia, locally in SE England, typically on derelict sites or in town centres, wintering in the south of its range.
A single at Skinningrove remained until at least 20th January, though given its elusiveness it could have been the same individual present on 29th March. Other singles in the first winter period visited: Pickering on 7th January; Filey from 11th–27th January and another inland at Rodley NR on 9th February.

Migrants started to appear during March with singles at Filey on 13th/14th March and again on 18th. A single visited Atwick on 17th, with one remaining there from 20th–27th March and another was at Pickering on the latter date. Flamborough logged 27 bird/days from 21st March to 6th May, with a maximum of three on 23rd April. The first at Spurn were relatively late, starting at the Point on 28th March; the month ended with one in Leeds on 30th.
The species was recorded at Spurn on 20 dates in April, usually no more than two, but an influx took place from 17th to 22nd April, with eight present on 20th and 21st. Elsewhere singles were at Filey on 4th/7th, others appeared at: Atwick on 6th; Halifax and Runswick Bay on 13th; Firsby Res two days later; and Skeffling on 17th. Filey Dams hosted two on 19th April, followed by singles at Boulby and Askham Grange Prison near York on 20th, Filey on 23rd, South Gare on 24th, Scarborough on 25th with one inland at Langdale End on 26th April.
Two were present at Spurn from 8th–10th May and then singles were recorded on five dates until the last on 29th. Elsewhere a single visited South Gare on 10th, a male followed at Scarborough on 17th, with a single at Bempton Cliffs RSPB on 24th.

Summer produced one at Flamborough on 1st June, a female appeared at Fulford Golf Course, York on 10th June, a single was at Spurn on 7th/8th July followed by another at Cliff Farm on 25th. A juvenile at Flamborough on 16th July may have bred locally. The urban centres of South and West Yorkshire still appear to contain a small

population and it is likely that additional birds went unseen: recorded a four sites, two pairs bred and in addition three singing males were present during the breeding season.
A lack of easterlies in October produced a very quiet autumn with one at Jeld Wren on 26th October, six at Flamborough and a single at Filey on 30th and two at Spurn on 31st October. November opened with singles at South Gare and Flamborough on 1st, eight at Spurn on 2nd, three at Flamborough on 6th and singles at Reighton on 8th and the Central Science Laboratory, York on 10th. The year ended with a single in Beverley on 29th December.

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* **A**
Amber list: uncommon breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. BBS 11/204
A locally declining trans–Saharan migrant.
Birds arrived across a broad front in late April following the first at Nosterfield NR on 17th, with eight at Spurn on 20th/22nd and four remaining on 23rd. A single was at Filey on 21st/23rd with a male at Scalby Lodge Pond the same day and two appeared at Bolton Abbey and Dob Park on 22nd. Flamborough hosted two on 25th. Numbers increased on 26th with five at Beaver Dyke, two males at The Height Wood and a single at Roundabout Wood (both at Wharnccliffe) and another at John O’Gaunts Res.

Arrivals continued into May and inland there were three males in the Little Don Valley on 4th May, and five at Clapham Nature Trail and three at Beaver Dyke Res on 5th, nine between Strothwaite Hall and Langthwaite on 10th, when six singing males and a female were at Wharnccliffe.
Along the coast there were five at Flamborough on 5th May and late on 11 visited Flamborough on 27th May, reducing to nine on 28th. Spring migration was above average at Spurn, with 61 bird/days logged; 11 were present on 27th May, nine remained the following day and spring’s last was on 30th May. There were just two spring records from Cleveland, a single at South Gare on 24th and a singing male on Eston Moor from 4th to at least 14th June.

The woodland valleys west of Sheffield remain a favoured location and breeding was proved at Mawk Royd, Wharnccliffe and Strines. Five pairs were present at Ewden Height, with juveniles present from mid summer, and a pair bred at Langsett Res. A pair was accompanied by recently fledged young at Helme, Huddersfield in July, a pair bred in a nest box at Crimsworth Dean, Halifax and breeding proved at White Crag Plantation, Bradford. However, the population within this tract of the Pennines is undoubtedly in severe decline. Further north singing males occupied several sites within the Harrogate district, including three at Haverah Park in mid–May. Four pairs were located within the immediate confines of Malham. In the east of the county, it is still described as common in the oak woodlands on the southern edge of the Moors west of Scarborough; as evidenced by the presence of nine males at Low North Camp. In East Yorkshire, a pair probably bred at Wharram Percy and one was singing north of Fridaythorpe on 13th May.
The first to return to the coast were at South Gare, Flamborough and Spurn on 17th August, with small numbers reported to the end of the month. However, significant numbers started to appear in September induced by light north–east winds. South Gare logged 65 on 6th September, with 38 at Flamborough the following day, when 12 were at Hawsker and Ness Point. Flamborough attracted 46 on 8th; six were at Castle Hill, Scarborough and also at Filey on 13th, followed by 40 at Spurn on 14th, with 102 in the Spurn area the next day, when five were at Long Nab. Flamborough logged 32 on 17th, with seven at Filey the following day.
Late birds were at Spurn from 1st–4th November, with the last recorded at Ripon Parks on 7th.

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra* **A**
Amber list: uncommon breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. BBS 1/204
A nationally declining migrant that winters in Africa. Recent evidence suggests a decrease in its breeding range in the Pennines. It was only detected in one BBS square.
The first returned to Filey on 21st April, with additional singles at Flamborough on 25th, Blackmoorfoot on 26th/27th and Spurn and Swillington Ings (pair) on 27th. Spurn recorded a relatively quiet spring, with just 46 bird/days logged until the last two on 30th May. Flamborough had 28 bird/days until the last on 4th June, with a best of four on 29th May.

Although undoubtedly under–recorded, the population in many areas is giving grave cause for concern. There were few cases of proven breeding: two pairs bred at Blacka Moor near Sheffield and probably bred at Hurkling and Ewden. Immediately to the north there were six singing males in the Meltham/Brow Grains area of Huddersfield, with two pairs fledging young. However, the decrease continues with just three territories in the Wessenden Valley, when between four and six is the norm. Breeding was not proved in the Halifax area, although two pairs were present in Withens Clough on 15th June; it did breed at Barden, Whetstone Gate and Leeshaw Res near Bradford. Two pairs bred at a single site in Upper Wharfedale with another pair fledging young

elsewhere; however, the population within the area appears to be declining. The only indication of breeding in the Harrogate district related to a pair accompanied by juveniles at West Agra. In the north-east of the county, five chicks fledged at Scaling Dam and birds were in suitable habitat on Eston Moor and Stanghow Moor in May. Two family parties of five and six were on Stoney Marle Moor near Scarborough on 25th July.

Returning birds started to appear along the coast from mid-August with two at Filey on 17th, followed by a more general arrival including 15 at Spurn on 20th, seven at Flamborough the next day and 18 at Spurn on 31st, when six made landfall at Filey.

In September inland parties included six at Silverwood Colliery Tip on 4th and seven at Wilthorpe Marsh on 7th. Drift conditions at the end of September's first week prompted an arrival along the coast, starting on 7th with 24 at Filey, 18 at South Gare, 11 at Hunt Cliff and 28 at Flamborough. Ten appeared at Hummersea on 12th and the following day produced 20 at Buckton and 17 on Castle Hill, Scarborough. Numbers peaked at both Spurn and Flamborough on 13th, with 27 and 57 logged respectively; the Flamborough count being the highest there since the 1980s. South Gare sheltered 12 on 14th September and two days later there were ten at Hunt Cliff. At the opposite end of the county there were 21 at Spurn on 16th. Filey recorded 28 on 23rd September and two days later Spurn hosted 23. Several late singles remained into October and the last were singles at Spurn on 2nd/3rd November, with a further two at Flamborough also on 3rd.

STONECHAT *Saxicola torquatus* **A**

Scarce breeding resident and uncommon autumn/winter visitor. BBS 11/204

The race found in Britain, *hibernans*, is increasing nationally at a rapid rate (+170% 1994–2008) and this is reflected locally. Continental passage birds can occur on the coast.

Records were widely distributed across the county, with up to four at Silverwood Quarry Tip from 1st January into April, seven individuals at Swillington Ings from 1st January through to 15th March, six at Filey on 6th January and four at Fairburn Ings on 13th January. February's maxima included four at Broomhead Moor on 2nd and five at Spurn on 10th/11th.

A small movement took place along the coast in March with: six at Spurn on 16th, eight on 19th, 13 on 23rd increasing to 20 on 27th, when 15 were at Flamborough. Elsewhere four stayed at Wilthorpe Marsh from 7th to 13th, five were at Langsett on 11th March and four visited Westerdale on 31st.

The huge rise in the number of breeding records continues apace and it is now well established on the Pennine uplands. For example, the population is at record levels in the Sheffield recording area and at least eight pairs bred on the moorland fringe near Barnsley at: Mickleden Beck; Midhope Moor (two juveniles); Wharncliffe (one juvenile); Winscar (two juveniles); Broomhead Moor (five juveniles); Canyards (four juveniles) and near Royd Moor Res (one juvenile). Further north it bred at six sites in the uplands in the Harrogate area. In the Scarborough area two pairs bred in Jackson's Bay raising two broods (the first time since 1973) and two pairs bred on Stoney Marle Moor, also raising two broods. There were at least two broods raised on the northern edge of the Filey area and two pairs bred at Flamborough.

Unusual summer records included a single at Swillington Ings on 1st June, Spurn on 17th July and one in a Yeadon garden on 17th August; ten were on Rudda House Moor on 27th.

Records increased in September with six at Flamborough on 6th, six at Rodley NR on 23rd, ten at Filey on 24th, followed by 17 at Spurn and 11 at Boulby on 26th. A further pulse occurred in mid October with 19 at Spurn on 11th and nine at Flamborough the following day. In November Spurn recorded 14 on 2nd November, 22 on 6th and 12 on 16th. In December up to six were at Spurn and eight logged at Filey on New Year's Eve.

Siberian Stonechat *Saxicola t. maura/stejnegeri* **A**

2,0,0,3,2

Rare coastal migrant; 48 previous records

Breeds widely across northern Asia from Urals through Mongolia and northern China and it winters from the north Indian subcontinent to southern China and SE Asia.

A male was discovered on the edge of the Tesco car-park in Withernsea on 1st November, where it was later photographed (CCR *et al.*) while a single was discovered at Easington on the same date, where it chose to linger from 1st–4th November (LJD *et al.*).

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe* **A**

Amber list: scarce breeding summer visitor; uncommon passage migrant. BBS 32/204

Widespread in Europe and as far north as Greenland, wintering in Africa south of the Sahara. Has previously declined markedly in its breeding range on the Pennines.

The wintering single at Cromer Point from the end of 2007 remained *in situ* until last noted at Burniston Bay on 28th February.

The first migrants arrived at Spurn on 16th, 18th/19th March, with the first inland at Winterset on 21st. Singles appeared at Silverwood Pit Top and Thurcross on 23rd and Edderthorpe Flash on 24th, when three were at Hartcliffe Hill. Singles then appeared at several sites before the month end, with three at Spurn and four around Grassington Moor on 30th. The following day five were at Flamborough and Spurn.

On 5th April three were at Mickleden Edge and six at Cowell Flatt. Four were at Nosterfield NR on 6th, five at Cononley Moor on 8th, six at Meltham Gap from 11th–19th (increasing to 12 on 25th), seven at Cowell Flatt on 12th and nine at Old Moor on 13th. An influx occurred at Spurn in the third week, with 14 on 20th and 18 on 21st. Another arrival took place from 27th, with 12 at Buckton, 15 at Scalby Lodge, 23 at Hunt Cliff and 25 at Spurn; the following day there were 11 on Carr Naze, Filey, 14 at Flamborough and 20 at Scalby Lodge.

In early May another arrival took place on 4th with 46 at Hunt Cliff and 54 at Filey; 17 remained there the next day. Flamborough hosted 30 on 5th May, with 22 at Spurn on 27th increasing to 24 the following day. Spurn's final spring total of 543 bird/days was the highest for over ten years.

There were few reports of proven breeding from the southern Pennines, although there were at least five territories on Pule Hill, Huddersfield and pairs bred at both Fly Flats and Soil Hill within the Halifax area. However, further north there were numerous reports of breeding received from Upper Wharfedale and five pairs on territory near Round Wood, Malham.

Singles started to appear along the coast from July with singles at Spurn on 9th, Flamborough on 11th, Filey on 13th and again 22nd–25th. Numbers remained low in August with a best of 12 at Flamborough on 21st. September produced the highest counts, with winds favourable for drift. The fall started on 7th September with 11 at Castle Hill, while 86 were at Flamborough on 8th. Numbers reduced over subsequent days until 40 were recorded at Spurn on 15th and 44 there on 16th, 20 at Buckton on 17th and 39 at Spurn on 18th. Late birds included singles at Meltham Gap on 1st October, Lofthouse Moor on 5th, Filey on 15th and Spurn on 17th October; the last were two at Spurn on 2nd November.

PIED WHEATEAR *Oenanthe pleschanka* **A**

0,0,0,0,1

Vagrant; four previous records

European range centred on Black Sea, reaching E Romania and Bulgaria. Also occurs widely across southern Russia, Kazakhstan and Mongolia to northern China. It winters in NE and E Africa and the SW Arabian Peninsula.

A female at Reighton Sands Holiday Camp from 8th–16th November represented the first record for the Filey area (AN *et al.*). Surprisingly it relocated to Bempton during the day on 16th, where it remained until 18th. It proved extremely popular and its confiding nature was a photographer's dream. The last record was a male at Spurn from 2nd–5th October 1998.

DESERT WHEATEAR *Oenanthe deserti* **A**

0,1,0,1,0

Vagrant; eight previous records

This species breeds from Morocco east to Central Asia, with autumn records most likely to be accounted for by reverse migration of eastern birds.

The 2007 male only remained at Cromer Point, Scarborough until 2nd January; those quick off the mark were able to add two species of wheatear to their year list on New Year's Day.



Desert Wheatear ◉
Jack Ashton-Booth

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus* **A**

Red list and UK BAP species: uncommon summer visitor and passage migrant. BBS 11/204

Breeds in upland Britain, but principally a passage migrant from northern Africa/southern Europe.

In the north-east of the county the first migrant appeared near Brotton on 12th April; around 25 were logged on passage through Cleveland during April, including five around Freebrough Hill on 17th and 12 at Hummersea on 26th. A further four followed in May: singles at South Gare and at Eston Nab on 4th and two at Hummersea on 13th, with one remaining until the following day.

Scarborough's first were two at Ravenscar on 2nd April, followed by singles at Scalby Lodge on 18th and 22nd and another duo at Ravenscar on 24th April. Filey's sole spring migrant appeared on 22nd April, while Buckton hosted two on 27th April. Spring passage also proved disappointing at Flamborough, where there were singles on: 19th April, 27th (two) and 29th April and a single on 16th-18th May.

Spurn's first were a duo at Sammy's Point on 19th April, with one still present the next day, when two males were at the Point. Four were at Spurn on 23rd and two stayed from 26th-28th April. Three lingered at Sammy's Point on 5th/6th May, followed by singles at Spurn on 14th and 29th May.

Inland, a male at Agden Beck near Sheffield on 30th March was the first and the uplands to the west of the city are fast becoming one of the last strongholds for a species in rapid decline. Breeding was proved at Little Howden, Burbage Rocks, Howden Edge and Strines Moor, with nest building observed at Hoar Clough. Later in the year Abbey Brook hosted a party of 20 on 31st August, which included several juveniles. Further north there was no proof of breeding within the Halifax area, with all traditional sites now deserted. A flock of seven was at Nab End, Addingham Moorside in Upper Wharfedale on 18th April. Reports again illustrated in decline in that general area, although a pair did bred at a single site. In the Harrogate district breeding was proved at Snilesworth Moor and at Steelhouse Gill.

Speeton hosted a single on 12th October and nearby one flew north-west over Reighton on 17th October and two visited Flamborough on 30th October. November opened with singles at Flamborough on 2nd and 5th November, while the fall on 6th produced two at Flamborough and a single at Filey; Scarborough's only autumn record related to one at Cloughton Wyke on 9th November.

Spurn's first returned on the early date of 15th September, followed by singles at Willow Cottage, Easington on 22nd September and another in the Triangle on 25th September. A single at the Point on 2nd October was an isolated record until a more substantial arrival from the end of the month. Three arrived on 30th October, followed by no more than two on several dates until 8th November and finally two at Sammy's Point on 12th November.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula* **A**

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

BBS 177/204: +57% (+23) 1994-2008, +14% (+5) 2007-08

The population has been increasing since 2004 and the long-term trend is upwards.

Evidence of the strength of the wintering population can be gauged by a count of 250 feeding in small parties in fields alongside Scalby Beck from Mowthorpe to the Hackness Road Bridge on 4th January. Spring coastal passage was subdued, although 76 were logged at Flamborough on 27th March. A group of 15 left woodland by Wykeham Lakes at dusk and headed off high on 30th March; Filey also logged 40 migrants on the same day. Sixty were recorded at Flamborough on 5th April, while to the south Spurn logged 95 on 15th March and 180 were present on 27th March. Inland spring movements were much harder to detect, although 60 at Thorp Arch Retail Park were most likely about to embark back towards the continent. That many of the wintering garden birds may have originated from much further afield was illustrated by the trapping of 51 in such habitat at Sharow near Ripon over both winter periods; wing lengths indicated many as having originated from the continent.

Numbers increased from the end of October, when 245 made landfall at Flamborough on 30th. Castle Hill, Scarborough hosted 80 on 4th November, but this increased to 200 on 6th when there were an additional 900 grounded in thick mist and drizzle at Scalby Lodge. However, the biggest count on 6th November came at Filey, where 3000 were estimated to be present mainly on Carr Naze; the sheer number of birds focused onto such a small area left a lasting impression on those fortunate enough to be present. To the south, Flamborough recorded an additional 2720 on the same day, while 250 were still grounded at Buckton the next day.

The first small arrival occurred at Spurn on 2nd October when 38 arrived, followed by 112 on 17th and 600 on 30th. However, the largest counts were in November, including an estimated 2400 grounded on 2nd. New arrivals continued over the next few days: 550 on 3rd, 560 on 4th, 780 on 5th, and 440 on 6th. Numbers then dropped dramatically, until a small arrival of 265 on 17th and 113 on 23rd November. Interestingly arrivals peaked at Spurn several days earlier than watchpoints further north and it almost entirely missed the large fall that took place on 6th November.

Signs of immigration at inland sites included: 60 in a single tree at Clifton, York on 9th October; 100 at Quarry Moor, Harrogate from mid-October; 120 at Old Moor on 31st October; 40 at Eccup Res on 10th November and 80 at Lemonroyd on 23rd November.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris* **A**

Red list: common passage migrant and winter visitor. Has bred. BBS 4/204

An entirely migratory species that breeds in Scandinavia and northern Europe east to Siberia, often passing through the county to winter further south and west. Presumably late migrants were recorded in BBS squares.

Many areas recorded flocks up to 400-strong during the early months, although larger aggregations included: 500 near Strensall on 12th and 17th January, 600 near Catterton on 19th January and 500 at Cononley Ings on 2nd February. Flocks sizes tended to increase as a return east loomed large with: 700 at Bent Hills on 31st March; 1000 at How Hill, Harrogate on 2nd April; 800 at Hebden in Upper Wharfedale on 6th April followed by 450 at Hawkswick on 12th April.

Emigration during spring was most obvious at Spurn with small numbers logged from mid-March, including highs of 94 on 15th March and 120 on 27th March. Late singles included one at Newbiggin, Filey on 3rd June, another at Grove Farm, Cayton on 6th June and one at Flamborough on 23rd June.

Spurn's first of the autumn appeared on 9th September, then up to two were logged from 21st-25th. Numbers increased from mid October, with 54 at Spurn on 15th. However, large numbers arrived along the entire coastal strip on 17th October, with bests of: 1500 through Sleddale, 750 over Scaling Dam, 995 logged at Flamborough and 1200 west over Sammy's Point. This substantial arrival was immediately picked up inland with 785 west over Potteric Carr and 600 over Farnham GP the same day. On 18th visible migration watchers logged 1500 passing over Redmires in 2hrs.

A further arrival took place at Spurn on 30th October when 690 made landfall, but the biggest numbers were recorded at inland sites the following day, including: 725 west-north-west over Redmires in 2hrs; 1200 at Sutton-on-Forest; 315 west over Potteric Carr; 650 west over Blacktoft Sands; and 650 west at Southfield Res. Undetected along the coast, this huge immigration continued apace over the first two days of November. Passage on 1st November included: 320 north-west over Redmires in 2.5hrs; 6440 over Thornton Moor Res; 550 at Fairburn Ings; 1000 at Swillington Ings; 5500 north over Staveley NR; 400 over Nosterfield NR, 200 over Farnham GP; 140 over Gouthwaite Res and 200 over Newby Hall. The following day 1340 flew south-east over Cononley and 1500 headed north-west over Staveley NR.

Good numbers then continued to arrive at Spurn during the first eight days of November including 510 on 4th when there were also 500 at Hebden in Upper Wharfedale; the following day Spurn logged an additional 650. The 6th November witnessed a significant arrival with tallies of: 1000 at Scalby Lodge; 160 on Castle Hill, Scarborough; 2500 at Filey; 5670 made landfall at Flamborough; further south, Spurn only logged 1100. The following day 290 remained at Spurn, while 1000 remained grounded at Buckton Hall. Presumably the inclement weather conditions on the coast prevented these latest migrants from reaching far inland. It wasn't until 8th November that sites away from the coast witnessed increased numbers with: 1800 at Agden Side; 2000 over Staveley NR and 500 at Lingham Lake. The following day there were 600 at Ben Rhydding and 500 at Eccup Res, with 500 at Reedholme, Doncaster on 10th November. Timble hosted 500 on 12th November, with 600 at Cononley Ings two days later. The autumn's last major movement occurred on 16th November with 930 south-south-west over Redmires in 2hrs and 460 north-west over Ogden.

Flocks over the last couple of months included 500 at Breary Banks on 22nd November and 810 at Old Moor on 15th December.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos* **A**

Red list and UK BAP species: common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

BBS 135/204: +54% (+24) 1994-2008, +101% (+6) 2007-08

Spring passage was only evident at Spurn, where there were 13 on 27th March and 14 on 4th April. Numbers increased in the second half of April with 26 on 20th April, followed by 38 on 21st, 32 on 22nd and 27 on 23rd April.

A slow but steady recovery has taken place both within the county and nationally since 1994; however, according to BBS monitoring, a dramatic increase took place in 2008 compared to the previous year.

Spurn recorded significant arrivals during September, with bests of: 33 on 14th, 87 on 22nd and 195 on 25th. Further north Buckton recorded 14 migrants on 14th September and Flamborough logged 68 on 24th September, followed by a further 25 at Buckton on 26th September; only small numbers were then evident along the coast until mid-October. However, inland there were 20 at Staveley NR on 6th October which represented an increase and 20 associated with 60 Blackbirds in a single tree in Clifton, York on 9th October. Spurn logged 25 on 15th and 27 on 29th October and there were 22 present on 2nd November. Flamborough hosted 45 during the thrush fall on 6th November, with 24 present at Hummersea the following day.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus* **A**

Red list: common passage migrant and winter visitor

Breeds from Iceland to eastern Siberia, but birds wintering in the county are mostly of Fennoscandian origin.

Several flocks of less than 250 were recorded at several sites over the first quarter, with a best of 300 at Temple Newsam on 6th January. Numbers increased along the coast during March as birds prepared to depart. Spurn logged 210 on 15th, but better still 1300 moved through Spurn on 27th March which represented a new spring maximum for the site; a count of just 29 on 31st March was Flamborough’s best during the same period. Spurn’s last of the spring was recorded on 1st June, with a particularly late individual at Flamborough on 10th June.

Autumn passage started with a single at Spurn on 17th September and two at Flamborough on 21st September; 31 were logged at Flamborough on 25th and 80 at Spurn two days later. October totals at Spurn began with 425 on 2nd and 133 on 7th. However, 5950 moved through Spurn on 15th October when there were also 820 at Flamborough.

An additional 2600 headed west over Spurn and 4200 flew west over Sammy’s Point on 17th, but much larger numbers made landfall further north. In total 17,175 tracked over Flamborough and then headed north–west over Speeton in a narrow band from 1000hrs until dusk; none were moving at dawn, but the total included 5820 north–west over Speeton in just 30 minutes between 1000–1030hrs (KC: CCT *et al.*). Hardly any made landfall at Filey and this pattern of arrival closely matched that witnessed elsewhere along the east coast. Thousands were tracked via radar arriving over Skegness, Lincolnshire, but were confined to a band only 1km wide as they hit the coast at 1000ft. Further south, another mass arrival passed over the University of East Anglia campus, where 15,000 were logged in the afternoon. The only significant inland movement on 17th October related to 520 west over Potteric Carr.

The following day these large numbers were picked up further inland: 500 headed over Redmires in two hours, 1600 flew over Paul Clough, 2360 over Ogden, 3740 over Caldene Fields and 7300 flew over Thornton Moor. Smaller numbers were noted heading west on 19th October, including 500 west over Pugney’s CP and 500 west over Thorpe Marsh; in addition there were 643 at Northowram. Coastal watchers then picked up the more significant arrivals in late October with 250 at Spurn and 210 at Flamborough on 23rd; 430 at Spurn and 262 at Flamborough on 29th and 820 at Spurn on 30th October. Visible migration enthusiasts then logged 1720 west–north–west over Redmires in two hours and 1000 at Quarry Moor, Harrogate on 31st October. The following day 3000 headed north–west over Staveley NR, with 770 arriving at Spurn the following day; another 1000 then flew north–west over Staveley NR on 3rd November. However, the biggest arrival was associated with foul weather on 6th November which grounded 300 at Scalby Lodge, another 300 at Castle Hill, Scarborough, 2500 at Filey and 4880 at Flamborough. On 9th November 500 flew over Eccup Res, with 500 at Wike on 14th November; the month’s final significant movement was witnessed at Redmires on 16th November, when 700 flew south–west. There were 1000 at Staveley NR on 3rd December and numbers built through the month at Old Moor, peaking at 3850 on 15th December.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus* **A**

Amber list: fairly common resident and scarce passage migrant

BBS 93/204: –33% (–20) 1994–2008, –25% (–1) 2007–08

It has declined rapidly nationally and locally from 1994–1998 and again since 2000. After an apparent reversal in 2007, the downward trend continued in 2008.

Survey results indicate that the breeding population is in significant decline; this is borne out by reports from several sites, including at Winterset where only seven territories were located, the lowest since 1998 (ten in 2007). Post–breeding flock sizes were also disappointing with maxima including: 31 at Woodhouse on 4th July; 30 at Langsett on 6th August; 40 at East Keswick on 11th August; 30 at Fairburn Ings on 25th August; 39 at Scaling Dam on 18th September; 35 at Oats Royd on 25th September; 43 at Redmires Res on 27th September and 35 at Leventhorpe Vineyard on 5th October.

There were few signs of movement, although 13 flew south–east at Speeton on 12th October. There were also four at Flamborough on 26th October, another four on 3rd November and a single on 7th, all of which coincided with arrivals of winter thrushes.

CETTI’S WARBLER *Cettia cetti* **A**

2,3,2,2,1

Rare visitor and occasional breeder

The breeding stronghold is in southern England, from where post–breeding dispersal or exploration seems to be occurring, with northerly range expansion probably dependent on a succession of mild winters.

Blacktoft Sands is firmly established as the most reliable site, with at least a single through to 9th April and again from 8th October to the end of December; two were present on 11th February and 9th December.

A single was heard calling at South Marsh, Tophill Low on 12th January, although there were no further records from this site. However, Gildholme on the Leven by–pass attracted a singing male on 9th February (SMo).

PALLAS’S GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella certhiola* **A**

0,0,0,0,1

Vagrant; first county record

One was flushed near Beacon Ponds, Spurn during the late afternoon of 14th September. The finders were pretty confident of their initial identification, although the species was confirmed when trapped and then aged as a juvenile. It was released near Kew Villa at 1745hrs and was subsequently seen a couple of times until 1900hrs (BRS: GJS: PWR *et al.*). This was a superb find of a bird that is incredibly hard to see away from Shetland, representing only the sixth English record.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia* **A**

Red list and UK BAP species: scarce breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. BBS 2/204

This secretive West Palearctic species winters in West Africa. There has been a substantial national population decline since the 1970s, but local populations fluctuate annually.

By far the earliest arrived at Pugney’s CP on 8th April, with Spurn recording the next on 13th. One was at Carlton Marsh on 17th April; Winterset and Woodlesford hosted singles the following day, with lone individuals at Nosterfield Quarry and Old Moor on 19th. A small coastal arrival was evident on 22nd/23rd April, but significant numbers then arrived throughout on 26th/27th April. A few coastal migrants were recorded through May, with the last at Spurn on 27th.

Breeding reports suggested a slight decrease on 2007, with 17 territorial males on Thorne Moors and ten at Blacktoft Sands the highest. Nine were present at Old Moor (two less than last year) and six at Fairburn Ings (two down on the previous summer). Only three males took up territories at Winterset compared with nine in 2007.

A total of seven were logged on passage through Spurn between 20th August and 27th September, including a single on 14th September, coinciding with the appearance of its rarer cousin. Other coastal migrants included singles at Filey on 30th August, Hunt Cliff, Brotton on 7th September and Long Nab, Burniston on 11th September. Inland a late single was located in Lady Canning’s Plantation, Sheffield on 26th September. There were no October reports.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* **A**

Fairly common breeding summer visitor and uncommon passage migrant. BBS 18/204

Breeding from Ireland to central Siberia, this trans–Saharan migrant breeds in the county on low ground around lakes, along waterways and also in oilseed rape fields. Nationally it is slightly decreasing.

Singles at Winterset Res on 6th April and Thrybergh CP the following day were early and well in advance of the next at Fairburn Ings on 16th. Subsequently there were singles at Pugney’s CP on 17th, Old Moor on 18th and Worsbrough Res on 19th. The first coastal migrants appeared on 21st and a widespread arrival took place on 27th April. Numbers peaked at 13 at Spurn on 5th and 9th May and eight were at Flamborough on 26th May.

Following on from a poor breeding season in 2007, matters hardly improved this year. Blacktoft Sands held a massive 200 singing males, but there were only 30 territorial males at Fairburn Ings (41 in 2007) and 20 males at Cononley Ings, compared with 26 last year.

Pugney’s CP experienced a serious decline, with only single figure counts, down from over 30 in previous years. However, numbers held up at Winterset (17 territorial males) and Old Moor (26 territorial males), but there were reduced numbers at both Rodley NR and Thorne Moors. Mixed fortunes were reported in terms of breeding success, but the general declines from many key sites gives cause for concern.

After a good count of 35 at Nosterfield Quarry on 17th August, autumn passage was apparent at a few sites in September, with small numbers inland, particularly on 13th/14th September and sporadically along the coast until 26th September; it was recorded at Spurn on seven dates and 15 bird/days were logged at Flamborough. The year’s last was at Skipton SW on 27th September.

MARSH WARBLER *Acrocephalus palustris* **A**

1,2,3,0,38

Red list and UK BAP species: rare passage migrant: occasional breeder

This trans–Saharan migrant is widespread through the Western Palearctic, but its tiny breeding population in southern England is declining.

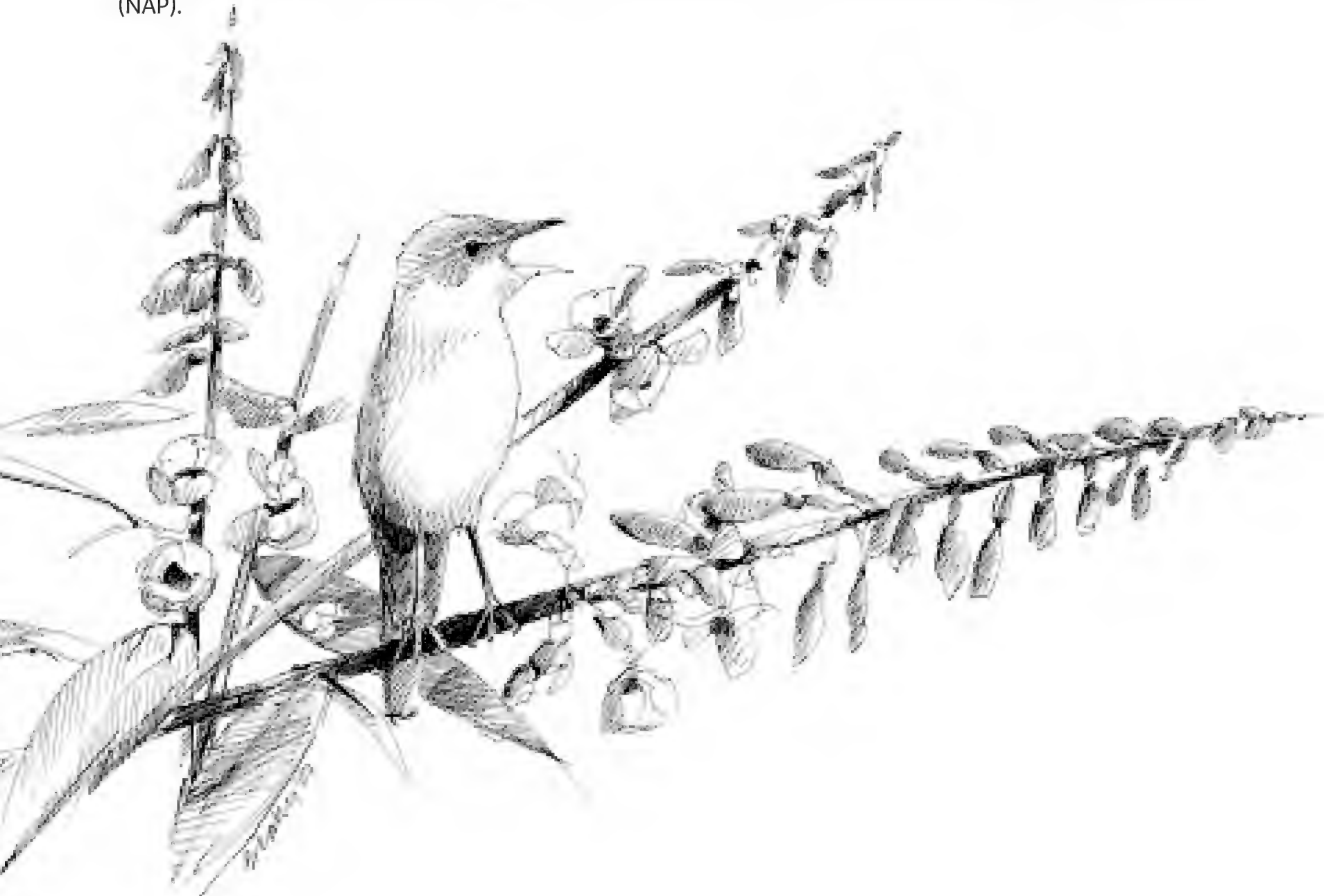
An unprecedented spring passage started with a singing male in Filey CP on 24th May (CCT *et al.*). However, an incredible influx took place from 27th May during classic fall conditions triggered by north–easterly winds and rain.

Spurn recorded three singing males on 27th May: at post 67 and still present the next day (AR *et al.*); another showy male at Cliff Farm (AAH *et al.*); and north of the official recording area, one along Beacon Lane and still present the next day (AR *et al.*). Two were at Easington on 28th May: one at the Cemetery (RT) and another at Willow Cottage (AJS), while five were at Spurn the same day: two were singing in the early morning at the Point (GED); another sang/showed at post 54 for most of the day (GED *et al.*); another sang during the afternoon south of the Warren (AR *et al.*) and another sang for most of the morning at the south end of Beacon Lane (ICW *et al.*). Elsewhere, there were two singing males at Flamborough on 28th May, increasing to five the following day (PC *et al.*), one singing at Bempton Cliffs on 28th that stayed until the following day (IK *et al.*) and two singing males at Aldbrough and a single singing at Grimston on 28th (TI: AFJ).

Three new males were discovered at Spurn on 29th May: one singing at Rose Cottage and occasionally showing well (AR *et al.*), another singing opposite the church (AR *et al.*) and another singing in Church Field (AAH *et al.*). This latter male was joined by a female on 1st June with nest-building first noted on 4th June. The adults were carrying food on 3rd July and four fully fledged juveniles were seen on 18th July, after which they quickly dispersed. Breeding was last recorded in 2001, when a pair fledged young at Thornwick Bay, Flamborough.

Castle Hill, Scarborough hosted a singing male on 29th May (NWA *et al.*), with another the same day at Coatham Marsh (MAB). On 30th May, one was singing on Beacon Lane, Kilnsea (JC) and another sang at Sammy's Point; it was then joined by a female on 31st and both were still present on 1st June (IS *et al.*). Castle Hill, Scarborough hosted another singing male on 31st May (NWA: SH: SW *et al.*), but new birds continued to be unearthed at Spurn: another singing male first seen at Rose Cottage moved into Church Field from 31st May to 2nd June (SE *et al.*) and a single sang at the Point on 31st May (JHe). Two more singing males were located in the Spurn area on 1st June: at Wire Dump (PWr *et al.*) and by the riding school (JMT). Most presumably then moved on, although singing males were at the Point at Spurn on 5th June (SML) and there again on 10th June (PCo). Finally, two males were in Church Field at Spurn on 16th June.

In autumn singles were present at Spurn on 13th September (RD: RSca) and at South Gare on 14th September (NAP).



Marsh Warbler •
Ray Scally

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* A

Uncommon breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. BBS 8/204

The nominate subspecies breeds in the western Palearctic and winters south of the Sahara. Although restricted by habitat requirements, nationally the population has been spreading northwards and westwards, and this pattern is reflected in the county.

Potteric Carr attracted the year's first on 10th April, with the next at Blacktoft Sands on 16th and at Fairburn Ings on 19th. Coastal migrants were rarer than Marsh Warblers at several sites, with only three at Flamborough between 28th April and 14th June; Spurn also recorded its first on 28th April. Widespread arrivals occurred inland on 25th/26th April and the species appears to be doing well, holding territory in even the smallest patches of *phragmites*. Some 400 territories were estimated at Blacktoft Sands and counts of territorial males at several other sites were broadly comparable with last year: Winterset held 51, Pugney's CP 40 and Old Moor 45.

However, Fairburn only recorded 65 territories (down by 40), Staveley NR held ten (down ten) and there was a huge decline at Wykeham Lakes, from 39 to just five territories.

In autumn, inland passage was detected on 7th/8th and again on 24th/25th September, with 25 present at Old Moor on the latter date. Spurn recorded the last coastal migrant on 1st October, although the latest visited Winterset on 5th October.

GREAT REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* A

0,0,1,0,1

Rare migrant, mainly in spring; 13 previous records

Breeds throughout north-west Europe and winters in tropical Africa.

A singing male was initially heard singing on the edge of a reedbed bordered by willows at Staveley NR at 0530hrs on 24th May (PTT *et al.*). The song was recorded on a mobile phone during the course of the morning; it remained until at least mid-afternoon, but was not present the following day. The last record was at Spurn on 27th May 2006.

ICTERINE WARBLER *Hippolais icterina* A

10,10,4,2,46

Scarce coastal passage migrant, more common in autumn

This species breeds from Norway east through central and northern Europe to western Siberia, and winters in sub-Saharan Africa. First-winter birds start to appear in early August and passage is usually over by mid-September. Nationally one in seven records occurs in spring.

It was a record-breaking spring and a good showing in the autumn. Spurn recorded the first singing male on 25th May which then remained at the Point until 1st June (AAH: JT: JWo *et al.*). Another male sang at the Wire Dump, Spurn on 26th and remained until 28th (JG *et al.*) with one in song at Thornwick Bay, Flamborough on 26th/27th May (LB: AMA: JMP).

Four new arrivals made landfall at Spurn on 27th May: another at the Point that stayed until 29th (AAH: NP *et al.*); a single at Wire Dump (until 28th); one singing in the Crown & Anchor car park until 28th (ICW *et al.*) and another at post 47 that was still present on 28th (AR *et al.*). Other arrivals on 27th May included singles at Filey (CCT *et al.*) and another trapped at Buckton (MT).

No fewer than 14 arrived on 28th May, including nine in the Spurn area with singles at post 70 (BRS); at post 67 (SM); at post 57; at post 51 (GED); at Sunny Cliff (AR); a singing male at Rose Cottage until 31st May (AAH); a single at Easington Cemetery until 29th May (MGS); at Sammy's Point (RT) and on Beacon Lane (RT). In addition there were two at Flamborough, with one staying to the following day (PAL *et al.*) and singles at Bempton Cliffs, Filey (PLM) and Castle Hill, Scarborough (SH). On 29th May new arrivals were recorded at: the Point, Spurn and remained there until 2nd June (AAH); south of Spurn Point's car park (BAs); duos at Flamborough, Castle Hill in Scarborough (DBY: SH: SW *et al.*) and South Gare and a single at Aldbrough (TI: AFJ). Flamborough's final spring record was singing on 31st May (PAL: IM: BR *et al.*) and the last at Spurn was trapped near the Warren on 4th June (NP *et al.*).

Autumn began with a single at Kettleness and two at South Gare on 6th September. The following day there were singles at Saltwick Nab, Spurn (AJG) and Boulby Cliffs, whilst Flamborough played host to three (RAB: GC: MT *et al.*). Further birds appeared at Flamborough on 10th September, Locke Park, Redcar on 14th and finally again at Flamborough on 18th September (GRB).

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla* A

Common breeding summer visitor/passage migrant; scarce wintering species

BBS 94/204: +68% (+48) 1994-2008, -2% (-2) 2007-08

Breeds throughout most of Europe. The significant long-term increase due to climate change, as recent mild winters have encouraged wintering in Britain and northern Europe and early return migration, seems to have stalled since 2007.

Up to 30 were present in Harrogate during the first two months of 2007, but only one was located this year. That picture was also reflected elsewhere, although Sheffield recorded up to ten and around 20 were present at various other sites in January and February. A single at Potteric Carr on 6th March may have wintered nearby, whilst singing males at Ulley CP on 14th March and Staveley NR on 20th were probably spring arrivals. Spurn recorded its first on 31st March and then hosted a light spring passage up to 10th June, with a maximum of 11 on 23rd April. Seven were at Castle Hill, Scarborough on 24th April and six at Flamborough the next day. Twelve were logged at Flamborough on 8th and 25th May.

The 3rd/4th April produced a widespread inland arrival and another wave occurred on 24th/25th April, including birds moving through to higher ground. Slight declines were recorded at several sites during the summer, with 50 territorial males at Winterset the lowest count there since 1997 and 15 pairs were found at Fairburn Ings, half the figure of two years ago.

Migrants appeared at Spurn from 4th August, while passage inland included 46 at Bolton Ings on 31st August. Low numbers moved through during September and most of October, with a best of 12 at Spurn on 30th October. November featured spells of easterly winds and proved to be a much more productive month, with peaks of 16 at Spurn on 4th and 22 there on 6th November; the last was recorded there on 23rd.

November and December produced around 35 wintering, including four at Fairburn Ings.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin* **A**

Common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. BBS 23/204

A summer visitor from Africa which breeds throughout most of Europe in suitable habitat, it has declined nationally by 17% since 1994. Encouragingly, found in a higher percentage of BBS squares this year.

The earliest appeared at Newham Hall, Middlesbrough on 16th April. Several others appeared inland from 21st onwards and the first on the coast appeared at Spurn on 26th April. Peak passage coincided with the arrival of Marsh and Icterine Warblers at the end of May, with 11 at Spurn on 27th, seven at Flamborough the next day and nine at Spurn on 29th.

Most arrived back on breeding grounds over 2nd/4th May and numbers appeared to hold up compared with the situation for the Blackcap. Highest counts were 18 singing males at Winterset, 17 at North Cliffe Wood and ten at Ripon Loop.

Autumn passage peaked during early September when drift conditions proved conducive to the arrival of several passerine species, again including Icterine Warblers; by far the highest count occurred during a cracking fall at South Gare on 6th September, when at least 50 were present. Nearby 11 were at Hunt Cliff on the same day, but these numbers weren't reflected further south. However, later in the month nine were at Flamborough on 14th September (and again on 18th), ten were at Spurn on 15th and 12 on 16th. Very few were recorded in October and Filey hosted the last with singles on 8th–10th November and another on 12th.

BARRED WARBLER *Sylvia nisoria* **A**

16,26,12,10,9

Scarce coastal passage migrant, very rare in spring

Breeds through central and eastern Europe to western Siberia, wintering in East Africa. It leaves the breeding grounds early, with the first Yorkshire autumn records, of juveniles, commencing in late July. Nationally only one in about 280 occurs in spring, and Yorkshire has had only one, in 1998.

All nine records were confined to September. Port Mulgrave recorded the first on 7th, followed by singles at Old Fall, Flamborough (RAB: PC: JWal) and the Wire Dump, Spurn on 10th; the latter lingered until 14th, although proved typically elusive throughout its stay (PCo *et al.*). Further north a single was discovered in hedges inland of Long Nab, Scarborough on 15th September (NWA). Flamborough hosted the next on 19th (PAL) with another appearing the following day at Chalk Bank, Spurn and remaining *in situ* until 22nd September (DAPW *et al.*). A single lurked at the Point, Spurn on 22nd (AAH), followed by one at North Landing, Flamborough on 24th (AMA). The year's final record came at the Dell, Bempton Cliffs on 28th September.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca* **A**

Fairly common to uncommon breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. BBS 17/204

The nominate form is a summer visitor to Western Europe, migrating south–east to its wintering grounds in north–east and central Africa. Nationally it has declined since 1994.

The first appeared at Thrybergh CP on 14th April with the next at Garforth on 17th. A widespread arrival then took place on the coast and at inland sites from 21st–27th; 13 appearing at Spurn on the latter date. Passage continued into early May with Flamborough logging 31 on 2nd May and later in the month Spurn held 14 on 17th. The last real evidence of spring passage was provided by four on Castle Hill, Scarborough on 25th May.

There was a rather mixed bag of reports from the breeding season, with continued declines affecting some sites including Upper Wharfedale and Bradford (where there was only one report), but conversely continued success at Spurn where there were more pairs than in 2007, many of which were double brooded. At Winterset there were ten territories, with eight at Flatts Lane CP.

Young birds began wandering from late July with light passage witnessed from inland locations on 23rd/24th August. However, drift conditions in early September increased numbers along the coast. On 6th September there were 18 at South Gare and eight at Hunt Cliff and six at Flamborough the next day. Spurn hosted 13 on 16th September with a similar number present on 25th. On 26th September four were at both Boulby and Flamborough. October lacked easterlies until the very end and consequently numbers remained low until six appeared at Spurn on 31st. A few lingered into November, including an eastern form trapped and ringed at Buckton on 1st and the last two at Spurn on 9th; again showing features of an eastern form, presumably *halimodendri*.

Unusually one was discovered attempting to winter in Hedon Road Cemetery, Hull on 26th December, last reported there on 28th.

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis* **A**

Amber list: fairly common to common breeding summer visitor and passage migrant

BBS 87/204: –3% (+16) 1994–2008, +12% (+1) 2007–08

The western European nominate form winters in the vulnerable semi–arid northern Sahel zone. The population appears to be stable at 2004 levels.

After an early first at Selby on 8th April, the species showed a remarkably similar arrival pattern to Lesser Whitethroat, with two on 13th April, at Barnsley and Rotherham, the next at North Duffield Carrs on 17th and then a widespread influx from 21st. Early May brought the highest counts along the coast, with 42 at Spurn on 3rd May and coincidentally 42 at Flamborough on 5th May, although no other coastal site reported double figures.

Although numbers of territorial males were down in several areas, breeding productivity appeared to be better than last year. Only 29 singing males at Winterset represented another decline, with 39 present in 2007 and as many as 70 males as recently as 2004. Other declines were noted at Fairburn Ings, Rodley NR and Thrybergh CP and throughout Leeds and Sheffield, albeit with only a slight decline in the latter area. However several locations did record good numbers including 40 at Old Moor. On a positive note, a large number of juveniles were trapped at Spurn, implying a healthy rate of fledging.

Autumn passage improved on the previous year, which was evident across several inland sites at the very end of August, with eight at Blackburn Meadows on 29th. Numbers increased on the coast towards the end of September's first week with 21 at Flamborough and six at Hunt Cliff on 6th followed by 16 at Spurn on 15th September. Inland, the last graced East Keswick, Leeds on 27th September, while the last coastal record appeared to relate to a single at Flamborough on 2nd October. However a remarkably late individual was then found at Holmpton on 8th November.

DARTFORD WARBLER *Sylvia undata* **A**

0,3,0,0,0

Amber list: vagrant; five previous records

Breeds in southern England in increasing numbers, and from the western Mediterranean east to Italy.

The singing male was again present at Blacka Moor from at least 5th May to 3rd August, often in close company with a female Whitethroat. This male was first seen in 2005, although its whereabouts during the winter remain a mystery.

SUBALPINE WARBLER *Sylvia cantillans* **A**

0,1,1,0,3

Rare migrant, almost annual in recent years; 36 previous records

Breeds through the Mediterranean from north–west Africa to western Turkey and Israel, and winters in North Africa.

It proved to be an excellent year, with three records. A first–summer male spent the day on the edge of dense vegetation on the cliffs at Brotton on 3rd May (DAM *et al.*). Another male, Filey's second ever, spent the morning singing in the Top Scrub on 28th May, but wasn't seen after falling silent late morning (LG *et al.*). Finally diligent patch work brought rewards with the discovery of a late single in hedges at Bempton Cliffs on 31st October that remained the next day (TDC *et al.*); the prevailing weather conditions and date clearly point to the possibility of an eastern origin.

GREENISH WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochiloides* **A** 2,15,2,1,1

Rare migrant to the coast, mostly in autumn; 66 previous records

The European and west Siberian race *P. t. viridanus* has expanded westwards and breeds sporadically in Scandinavia and Germany, and from the Baltic countries east to west Siberia. It winters in the Indian subcontinent.

A single at South Gare on 26th September was late, since only a handful of previous records have turned up in the last week of September (WIB *et al.*).

PALLAS'S LEAF WARBLER *Phylloscopus proregulus* **A** 56,12,2,8,20

Scarce autumn migrant; very rare inland; 383 previous records

Breeds from south central Siberia east to the Sea of Okhotsk, and winters in south-east Asia. It mostly occurs in October, with a few records into November.

The lack of easterlies throughout October reduced expectations, although a switch in wind direction at the very end of the month triggered an arrival. The first appeared on 30th October with three at Flamborough: in gardens on the Outer Head, at South Landing and Old Fall, with the latter two staying to 2nd November (PC: PAL: JMP *et al.*). In addition a single was discovered on Castle Hill, Scarborough on 30th (NWA *et al.*). The following day there were new arrivals at Spurn (BRS), Holmpton Churchyard (GJS) and Grimston (TI).

November opened with a single at the Crown and Anchor, Spurn (GP), with more at Spurn on 2nd November, at the Wire Dump and at the Point (DH: JMT). On 3rd a bird frequented the bridleway at Holmpton and fresh finds the following day involved singles in Filey CP (J & TGD) and in a mist net at Kew Villa, Spurn which then lingered until 7th (PCo *et al.*). A single at Spurn on 5th November finally settled near Canal Scrape car park, followed by one at grimston on 6th (TI) and another in Arndale, Filey on 6th/7th (SC *et al.*). Three arrived on 7th at Aldbrough (AFJ), Filey's Glen Gardens and Castle Hill, Scarborough (SW), the latter still present the next day. Finally a search of a ravine at Reighton Sands Caravan Park on 8th produced another whilst the finder was attempting to pin down an elusive wheatear (AN).



Pallas's Leaf Warbler ◉
Jack Ashton-Booth

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus* **A** 50,245,58,148,135

Scarce autumn passage migrant; rare inland and in spring

This tiny and delicate migrant breeds throughout Russia east of the Urals and winters from Nepal east to south-east Asia. It mostly occurs from mid-September to early November, and since the mid-1980's numbers have significantly increased.

Autumn rarely feels complete without the presence of these Siberian gems and the first arrived at Spurn on 14th September. The Spurn area then recorded birds daily from 20th September through to 2nd October, with a best of nine on 25th. It was present on several dates in mid-October, but numbers increased as winds switched to easterlies from the end of the month; four were logged on 2nd November, with the last present on 15th/16th November.

Flamborough recorded its first on 16th September, with two present the following day, increasing to three on 18th. This was followed by a significant influx starting with eight on 24th. Fourteen were present on 25th September, with seven new arrivals on 28th. Five remained the next day, although numbers dropped as westerly

winds dominated through October. Singles were present at Flamborough on 1st, 5th and 14th October, followed by three on 15th and one still the next day. Easterlies prompted the arrival of a single on 30th, with another from 31st October to 7th November, and two more on 2nd November (one remaining until 3rd). At least 39 birds were involved.

Filey's first made landfall on 16th September followed by three on 24th September with five the next day and as many as seven in the area on 26th, with a single on 27th and two on 28th. Subsequently singles appeared on 8th October, one was trapped on 14th, and another arrived on 21st. Two were found on 2nd November, with Filey's last on 8th.

Bempton Cliffs held a particularly skulking bird on 15th September with another at Castle Hill, Scarborough the same day. A single was discovered near Speeton Church on 19th September and preceded a significant influx that took place from 24th. Aldbrough hosted a single on 24th, followed by a general arrival on 25th involving: two at Buckton (until 26th); one at Cliff Top House, Scarborough; a single at South Gare (to 26th); two at Locke Park, Redcar; and a good inland record at Lakeside, Doncaster (JCa). Further birds were located on 26th at Bempton Cliffs, Burniston's Long Nab (to 27th), at Lovell Hill (to 28th) and inland at Whitgift. New finds on 27th included a single at Speeton Church, two at Bempton joining the bird already present, singles in Saltburn and Robin Hood's Bay, three at Bridlington, two at Holmpton and two excellent inland records: the first trapped near Ripon (PKB: RTP) and the other from Broomhill, Barnsley (KR: SR *et al.*). New arrivals were located at South Gare and two were still present at Bempton Cliffs and one was a long way inland at Clapham on 28th. A bird at Speeton Manor Farm was a fresh find on 29th along with a single at Castle Hill, Scarborough.

Another appeared inland at Smawthorne Marsh, Castleford on 2nd October, followed by one at Yeadon Cemetery, Leeds on 8th/9th (NAJ) and yet another at Limb Valley, Sheffield on 12th (PLB). On the coast Jackson's Cart Road in Scarborough played host to a single on 8th, but the next arrivals weren't until 31st with two at Holmpton and one at Skelton. In November there were singles at Holmpton on 4th, South Gare on 6th, Castle Hill, Scarborough on 7th (to 9th) and Long Nab on 8th.

On the face of it a minimum of 135 birds seems remarkable on the back of persistent westerly winds.

RADDE'S WARBLER *Phylloscopus schwarzi* **A** 1,2,2,0,4

Rare coastal migrant on autumn; 40 previous records

This south Siberian species winters in south-east Asia.

A single at South Landing, Flamborough on 26th September was relatively early (JRa *et al.*). Three were then found in early November, the first of which stayed around the lagoon at South Gare from 3rd-4th (JBD: AK: MDR *et al.*). The other two were discovered on 7th November: on the north side of Castle Hill, Scarborough (JM: SW *et al.*) and at Easington Gas terminal through to 8th (JWo *et al.*). The latter record was the latest ever for the Spurn area.

DUSKY WARBLER *Phylloscopus fuscatus* **A** 1,2,1,2,2

Rare coastal migrant in autumn; 35 previous records

This species breeds in through Siberia to north-east China wintering from Nepal to south China. It is usually a late autumn visitor.

A mobile and elusive individual remained at Spurn from 2nd-6th November (ASD: IS *et al.*). It was initially found at the Wire Dump but relocated to Chalk Bank and then later to the Narrows on 6th.

Another was discovered in the ravine at South Landing, Flamborough at 1030hrs on 3rd November; unfortunately after showing for several minutes, it went to ground and wasn't relocated (RAB: JMP).

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* **A**

Red list and UK BAP species: uncommon and local breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. BBS 2/204

The breeding range of this trans-Saharan migrant is restricted to woodlands on the upland margins extending up to the Arctic Circle, with Britain's rapidly declining population on the western edge of its breeding range.

Sadly the decline continued and seemed especially obvious in Upper Wharfedale; Strid Wood held only one singing male regularly, although two were heard on a couple of dates. A mobile male lingered at Grass Wood from 30th April through to 21st July, joined in Lower Grass Wood by another on 6th June. The previously reliable Hebers Ghyll failed to produce any records this year.

In the Sheffield area Wharnccliffe Wood held up to seven singing males (breeding confirmed) and there were five singing males at Rivelin Dams on 4th May and three at Wyming Brook on 2nd May. Only one male was present at Strines Dyke, compared with up to four there over recent years. In addition, a male sang at Reddicar on 4th

May, four were at Blacka Moor on 12th May, three (one singing) at Redmires Res on 23rd May and two were at Langsett on 1st June.

Spring passage was relatively quiet, although the autumn brought an improvement. The first appeared at Rother Valley CP on 27th April, followed by one at Guisecliffe on 30th. In May one was at Skrikes Wood, Harrogate on 2nd with another at Hornsea Mere on 4th. Singles then moved through Shibden Head, Bradford on 5th, Lowerhouses, Huddersfield on 10th and Flamborough’s sole record of the year appeared the next day. Further north, Hutton Village held two singing males on 14th May (one remaining until the end of May) and one was at Low Wood Farm, Felbeck also on 14th. A migrant graced Easington on 19th before a male set up territory at Binn Green, Huddersfield on 25th May; it stayed until 15th June, but failed to attract a mate. North–easterlies at the end of May prompted the arrival of singles to Spurn and South Gare on 28th, both of which stayed to 29th, with a second individual at Spurn on the latter date. Another visited Castle Hill, Scarborough on 29th and remained the following day. At the beginning of June a single visited Dovestones on 2nd.

Autumn started with an early juvenile at Spurn on 14th July before a single at Scaling Dam on 21st. A flurry of records in early August involved one at Margrove Ponds on 1st, one at Spurn the next day and another at Kilnsea on 3rd. Two were discovered in the churchyard at Spurn on 6th, followed by a single nearby at the Warren on 12th. In the second half of August there were singles at Spurn on 24th and Flotmanby Carr, Scarborough on 31st. Three appeared in a fall on South Gare on 6th September, while the last sought shelter in the Crown and Anchor car park, Kinsea from 14th–19th with another on 23rd September.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita* **A**

Common breeding summer visitor; scarce in winter

BBS 83/204: +89% (+39) increase 1994–2008, +42% (+13) 2007–08

There has been a long–term increase locally, in line with national figures, as this species adapts to milder winters and adopts shorter winter migration patterns. Recorded in many more BBS squares this year.

There were up to two during January and February at Scarborough, Fairburn Ings, Chellow Dean Res, Old Moor, Winterset, Sand Hutton, Potteric Carr, Rodley NR, Yeadon Tarn, Swillington Ings, Close House, York, Horbury Wyke, Driffild, Filler’s Dam Woods, Aldwarke SW and Lemonroyd, Leeds.

Arguably the spring’s first were two at Fleet Plantation and three at Lemonroyd in the Leeds area on 2nd March, followed by singles at Old Moor on 5th and Winterset on 7th. Flamborough and Spurn recorded their first on 15th March, with a widespread influx over the following two days at inland sites. Spurn recorded 27 on 20th April, increasing to 36 two days later. Ten on 21st May at Spurn revealed the wide span of movement for such an early migrant. Spurn logged 446 bird/days in spring, which represented a marked improvement over last year.

Several sites recorded healthy totals of singing males including 55 singing males at Winterset while 21 at Old Moor were consistent with last year; 21 were at Fairburn Ings; 20 at Wharnccliffe Woods, 20 at Storrs, Sheffield and 16 in Worsbrough Valley.

In autumn small numbers were noted from mid–July, with 11 at Winterset on 20th August. September brought further high counts, with 12 at Speeton Manor Farm on 18th, Flamborough logged 16 on 17th and Spurn 18 on both 20th and 24th. Inland, good counts included: 15 at Rother Valley CP on 12th, 14 at Hay–a–Park on 13th and 12 at Potteric Carr on 28th, with a best of 20 at Fairburn Ings on 21st September. On 12th October 15 were at Spurn and 11 at Flamborough, although the highest count involved 22 at Spurn on 2nd November. Wintering singles/duos were settled back into damp woodlands and gardens at the end of the year and were noted at: Spurn, Flamborough, Scalby Mills, Snaygill Ings, Blacktoft Sands, Ogden, Dowley Gap, Fairburn Ings, Farnham GP, Thrybergh Tip, Harthill Res, Old Moor, Winterset, Worsbrough Valley, Barrow Pond, Thorpe Marsh NR, Potteric Carr, Rodley NR, Middlesbrough, Swillington Ings, Lemonroyd, Skipton SW, Whitby and Rotherham.

Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

–,–,–,–,5

Rare passage migrant; occasionally overwinters

All records in 2008 were submitted to and accepted by a working group set up by BBRC to review both the identification criteria and determine the number of annual records. In future, descriptions will only need to be submitted to the county’s Adjudication Panel.

Unusually the first record related to a singing male that set up territory at Filey Dams from 13th March to 16th April; it frequently sang during its stay with the call and song recorded (CCT *et al.*). More typically four occurred during the early November easterly airflow. The first appeared on the Outer Head at Flamborough (RB: MT *et al.*) and Middle Camp, Spurn both on 2nd November (LJD *et al.*). Two days later Flamborough hosted another, this time in a gully near South Landing (CCT). The final individual appeared in a Skelton garden on 12th November (DAM).

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus* **A**

Amber list: common to abundant breeding summer visitor and passage migrant

BBS 109/204: +6% (–32) 1994–2008, +53% (–5) 2007–08

The populations of this species, the commonest trans–Saharan passerine migrant, have been declining in Europe and in southern and eastern England. However, the last three years of BBS counts in the county have shown substantial recovery from the lows of 2003/4.

A single at Firsby Res on 24th March preceded another at Potteric Carr by two days, with one at Langsett Res on 28th. Spurn’s first appeared on 30th March, with several others inland, and it became a familiar bird throughout by 3rd April. A quiet spring at Spurn with just 216 bird/days and a best of 19 on 27th April; Flamborough’s only double figure count related to 32 on 2nd May with ten at Filey on 27th April. The latter week of April produced an *en–masse* arrival, notably on 25th with singing males back at most key inland sites. BBS data indicates an increase in excess of 50% on 2007, although some sites experienced a drop in singing males: Cononley Ings held 76 (88 in 2007), Fairburn Ings 64 (82), Thorne Moors 52 (60), Old Moor 125 (62) and Wharnccliffe Woods 68 (45). A site near Guisborough recorded a 50% decline from 2007 and an 80% decline over the last decade.

Migrants appeared from mid–July, including 30 at Kettleless on 12th and 22 were trapped and ringed at Winterset on 13th. The pace picked up in early August, when Flamborough held 22 and 15 were at Redmires on 3rd and Spurn logged 64 on 5th. Spurn recorded 66 on 20th August, with 61 at Flamborough and 40 at Filey the following day. The fall in early September produced: 25 at both South Gare and Hunt Cliff and 46 at Spurn on 6th; followed by 52 at Flamborough, 37 at Hawsker and 23 at Filey the next day.

Counts in mid–September were still robust, with 28 at Flamborough on 14th and 47 at Spurn on 15th and birds were conspicuous at several sites inland, including 20 at Old Moor on 19th. Thereafter numbers dropped quickly with only three October records at Spurn. Fairburn Ings recorded the last inland on 3rd October, although there was a spectacularly late individual at Spurn on 2nd November, concluding the best autumn there for over ten years.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus* **A**

Fairly common resident and passage migrant. BBS 31/204

Breeds from Britain east to Japan: northern birds are migratory responding to cold weather and breeding success. The population appears to be steadily increasing, largely due to the creation of suitable coniferous habitat.

The largest gatherings early on were 11 at Wilthorpe Marsh and 12 at Lemonroyd, Leeds, both in January. The first coastal migrant appeared at Filey on 7th March and 19 arrived at Spurn on 15th. Twelve made landfall at Filey on 19th, 15 were logged at Spurn on 23rd and 22 were there on 27th and 31st. Migrants were still evident in April including 16 at Spurn on 21st; Spurn recorded the last on 16th May.

Although widely distributed there were few specific counts in the breeding season, although Wharnccliffe Woods held 18 singing males on 15th May (six more than last year) with 14 in Strines/Dale Dike the same day.

Flamborough produced the first autumn migrant on 4th August, Redmires recorded 20 on 15th and Langsett Wood 14 on 29th August. A classic pattern followed, with numbers remaining low along the coast until the introduction of north–easterly winds, which this year occurred at the start of November. September’s best included 34 early in the month at Spurn on 5th, 72 there on 17th and 15 at Scarborough on the same day, plus 60 logged on 20th at Spurn. On 24th there were 78 at Flamborough followed by 80 at Spurn and 15 at Ulley CP the following day. Forty were at Timble Ings on 5th October, with a particularly widespread influx to all corners of the county taking place on 12th including: 60 in Limb Valley, Sheffield, while on the coast there were 95 at Flamborough and 70 at Spurn. A switch to northerlies on the last day of October delivered 150 to Spurn and respectable totals of 50 at Flamborough, 55 at Buckton and 70 at Holmpton. The bird logs were then bulging in early November, with the following noteworthy totals: 180 at Spurn on 1st, 450 at Spurn and 92 at Holmpton on 2nd, 104 at Flamborough on 3rd, 350 at Filey on 6th, 100 at Filey and 40 at Scarborough the next day and 50 at Scarborough and 30 at Hunt Cliff on 8th.

The highest count of the late winter period was 15 at Potteric Carr on 9th December.

FIRECREST *Regulus ignicapilla* **A**

76,30,32,35,104

Amber list: scarce winter visitor and passage migrant: bred in 1995 and 2001

This species breeds mostly in southern England, with north European populations migrating south–westwards to winter around the Mediterranean and providing a double passage on the coast.

Overwintering birds from 2007 remained at Lingham Lake until 13th January, which then relocated to Nosterfield NR on 20th; an elusive individual was at Lime Plantation, Eccup Res to 8th February, and up to four at Old Moor/Bolton Ings until 22nd March. Singles were present at Tophill Low on 13th and Worsbrough on 28th January.

In contrast to last year spring passage was exceptional and commenced with one at Easington on 10th March. The Spurn area then recorded a total of at least 50 during spring, including a peak of 11 on 31st March. The majority moved through at the end of March/early April, although seven were present on 11th April and four on 13th; stragglers remained until 29th April, with a much later bird on 31st May.

The first two at Flamborough were logged on 15th March and there were sightings regularly through to 11th April followed by another two on 27th. In total Flamborough recorded 20 individuals, with a best of eight (including five new birds) on 31st March, while six were present on 2nd April.

Two graced Filey on 16th March, with another on 19th. The Country Park at Filey attracted a single on 31st March which stayed until 2nd April and Reighton hosted a new bird on 1st April. Two appeared in the Country Park on 11th April and one of these lingered through to 13th.

Inland, the Rotherham area hosted two at Hooton Dike and Roche Abbey on 15th March and next day there was one at Queensbury, Bradford. Later in the month another spent two days at East Park, Hull on 26th/27th March, with the next at Eccup Res on 10th April. On 27th April two singing males were found poles apart, with the first at Locke Park, Redcar and the other in pines in the uplands at Redmires Res. Castle Hill, Scarborough then hosted a single on 28th April. Singing males completed the picture in the first half of the year: one at Guisborough Forest from 21st to 26th May, whilst another held territory in spruces at Strines from 20th–25th June.

Autumn was much quieter, starting with a single at Spurn from 14th–19th September and the next at Easington on 24th, one at Saltburn Valley Gardens on 25th and finally a single at the Point, Spurn on 27th September. Staggeringly, a lack of easterlies meant the only October record sneaked in at death at Buckton on 31st (staying until 7th November). Spurn hosted a single on 1st November which remained the next day, with others at Holmpton on 2nd and at Flamborough and Fairburn Ings on 3rd; the latter the first there since 2001. Further arrivals were trapped and ringed at Kew Villa, Spurn on 7th and at Broomhead Res on 9th. On 16th November a single was found at East Riddlesden Hall, Bradford and two were present in Danes Dyke, Flamborough, which were seen again on 23rd. A female at Bolton Ings on 23rd November was still present on 7th December and a single made sporadic appearances in Danes Dyke, Flamborough on several dates until 28th December, while another appeared at Tophill Low on 9th December.



Firecrest •
Colin Wilkinson

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata* **A**

Red list and UK BAP species: increasingly uncommon breeding summer visitor and passage migrant BBS 11/204

Distributed across the western and central Palearctic, this long-distance trans-Saharan migrant is usually one of the last to arrive, in mid-May. In common with many of these migrants, the population has been declining – nationally by 59% since 1994 – although there is some evidence from BBS surveys that 2008 saw a halt locally, and passage on the coast was certainly improved this year. However, evidence from local reports suggests a continued decline.

In East Yorkshire one at North Cave Wetlands on 26th April was the first of the year, with singles on 10th and 30th May. Two at Southfield Res on 18th May were unusual and the year's only ones there. Birds were present at Tophill Low and Wassand in the breeding season. Post-breeding, three were at Patrington Haven on 20th August, two were at Pulfin and High Eske on 30th August, one at Paull Holme Strays to 21st September and another single at Patrington Haven on 27th September.

First arrivals were noted in the north of the county at Clapham, Coatham and Cattersty Gill on 5th May. In the Scarborough area, breeding reported from Scampston Park and Dalby Forest, with birds also along the south edge of the North York Moors at Thornton-le-Dale and Beck Holes. In the Harrogate area, the first was at Fisher Green, Ripon, on 6th May and breeding recorded in Upper Nidderdale, where two pairs bred in How Stean Gorge, one pair at Lofthouse, and two pairs reported from Bishop Monkton. In the Ripon area single pairs bred again in a half coconut shell at Fisher Green, fledging three young on 23rd June, and at Sharow Grange; breeding also reported from Scar House Road and Sutton Howgrave. During the breeding season also recorded at Dacre Banks, Beverley, Ilton, and post-breeding noted at Farnham GP, Fountains Abbey, Scar House Road, and Staveley NR, with the last at High Batts NR on 18th September. In Upper Wharfedale, the population was holding up relatively well, with 20 breeding records, although woodland nest sites seemed to suffer relatively poor success compared to garden sites. Seven noted at Grassington on 31st May was a high count, only matched by a similar number between Strothwaite Hall and Langthwaite on 10th May. There were at least three pairs in the Cononley area, with four birds at Cononley Woodside on 8th September the only migrants recorded. Similarly, a few post-breeding birds were noted at Blackmoorfoot Res and at Fairburn Ings RSPB.

In the Leeds area most records were of migrants, although a family party was at Yeadon Cemetery in August and September. Further west, in the Bradford recording area, five pairs were reported around Barden with others at Stockbridge, Low Wood and Folly Hall.

In the Sheffield area breeding was proven in fewer localities, with most records from woodlands on the Pennine fringes such as Redmires Res. In the Rotherham area the species was reported from Lindrick Dale where breeding was confirmed, Dinnington Colliery, Long Thwaite Wood, Rother Valley CP and Thrybergh CP. It bred in the Worsbrough Valley in Wentworth Castle and also at Darton, Langsett Wood, Little Don Valley and Wharnccliffe. Pairs probably bred at Almondbury, Dovestones and Wortley. Post-breeding dispersal or passage was noted at a number of sites in August including: Edderthorpe Flash, Broomhill Flash, Old Moor, Potteric Carr, Rother Valley CP, Thrybergh CP, Wilthorpe Marsh, five at Redmires Res and the last two at Barrow on 20th September.

Spring passage on the coast was exceptional at Spurn where 300 bird/days were recorded between 4th May and 14th June, with a large fall of 21 on 26th May and a record 70 in the Spurn area the following day dropping to 46 on 28th. At Flamborough, migration between 7th May and 8th June produced 79 bird/days, with maxima of ten on 27th, 12 on 28th and nine on 31st May. Buckton hosted six on 27th May. Migrants were noted at Filey from 13th May, with a peak of seven on 27th May, and seven were at South Gare on 28th.

Passage in autumn was also remarkable at Spurn, consisting of 212 bird/days and resumed on 31st July, with an influx in mid-September that saw a peak 68 on 15th. Passage further north included 156 bird/days at Flamborough, with 20 on 20th August and in September: 22 on 13th, 33 on 14th, 22 on 17th. Also in September, two were at Buckton on 17th, four were recorded at Speeton between 16th and 20th, up to five noted at Filey on three dates, five were at Castle Hill, Scarborough on 13th and seven at Ravenscar on 25th. A very late bird was seen at the Narrows, Spurn on 4th November.

RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula parva* **A**
Scarce coastal passage migrant, rare in spring

26,10,3,2,45

Breeds from Sweden eastwards almost to the Urals, and winters in the Indian subcontinent. Just over one in twenty records are in spring, with most records in Yorkshire from mid-August to mid-November.

Unusually there were seven spring records. One was at North Landing, Flamborough on 13th May (AMA) with a female discovered at the Warren, Spurn the following day, which relocated to the Canal Scrape (NP *et al.*). A female was at Cliff Farm, Kilnsea on 26th with another female-type between posts 62 and 63 at Spurn on 27th/28th May (AR *et al.*). Also on 27th, one was found at Filey CP and was still present the following day (J & TGD *et al.*), followed by a female at South Gare on 28th (JBD *et al.*) and finally a first-summer male by the Roadside Pond at Flamborough on 29th (PC: PAL: JMP).

In autumn the first was an adult male at South Gare on 6th September (NAP *et al.*), a foretaste of an excellent passage. The next was in Old Fall Hedge, Flamborough on 8th/9th September, then a male stayed around a cave entrance near the Foghorn Station at Flamborough on 15th/16th (TD) with a male and first-winter seen on 16th on the south side of Castle Hill, Scarborough (NWA: JM *et al.*). First-winters were at Flamborough

in Flatmere (PAL) and South Landing on 17th (IB *et al.*) and on 22nd one was on Beacon Lane, Kilnsea (GF *et al.*) then on 23rd another at Flamborough in Flatmere (PAL), one between Kilnsea and Easington (AR), a male in the churchyard, Kilnsea that remained to 25th, and one at post 61, Spurn (MP), while further north one was found on the railway path by Raindale Ravine, Robin Hood’s Bay. On 24th there was quite a fall of drift migrants, with two found in the afternoon along Long Lane, Filey, still present the next day (TIC: JHo *et al.*); one at Bempton Cliffs RSPB also remaining to 25th; one at South Landing, Flamborough Head (PAL: IM *et al.*); a first-year in Kilnsea churchyard that was still present on 25th (SHo) and three at the Point at Spurn including a male that remained to 25th (MJP: JWi *et al.*)

A further arrival on 25th September saw two birds found at Whitestones Point; two found at Filey, one in Deepdene (SC) and one at the Tip (CW *et al.*); one trapped and ringed on Hoddy Cows Lane, at Buckton (SB: EG: MT: DW); two more birds found at Flamborough, one in Old Fall and one in the gardens of the Outer Head (PC: AH *et al.*), and one was in Easington (MJP) and another found in Kilnsea (GCT). On 26th another bird was found on Beacon Lane, Kilnsea (AA) and five birds were present at Flamborough, at least three being new, with a second bird in the gardens of the Outer Head, one at North Landing, and one at Hartendale as well as one still in Old Fall. On 27th two more at Flamborough were new in at Beacon Farm (AMA), and one was present in Hawsker Bottoms on 27th and 28th. In October, a first-winter was at Cromer Point on 7th (KW) and Old Fall sheltered a late first-winter on 31st October and 1st November (KC *et al.*).

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca* **A**

Amber list: increasingly uncommon and local breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. BBS 1/204

A summer migrant to the Western Palearctic from western Africa, the breeding range in the county is largely restricted to the west and north, usually associated with Sessile Oak, and is highly dependent on nest-boxes. This species is also in decline, the national population having fallen by 54% since 1994.

The first appeared in the Washburn Valley on 22nd April. The majority of records came from Upper Wharfedale, where Grass and Lower Grass Woods, Strid Woods and Folly Hall Wood remained favoured sites, and other records from Hanging Woods, Swinsty, and the Valley of Desolation and along the stretch of river north of Barden Bridge; four were also present on Clapham Nature Trail. The highest counts of singing males at the major sites were ten at Strid Woods (*cf.* nine in 2007 and five in 2006), three or four at Grass/Lower Grass Wood (*cf.* four in 2007 and five in 2006) and four at Folly Hall Wood (*cf.* five in 2007 and two in 2006). There were ten nests in boxes this year, compared to eight last year, but these only produced 54 juveniles (51 from the eight boxes in 2007). In the Harrogate area, a pair was already at a box along the Scar House road on 29th April, later breeding successfully. Single singing males were at How Stean Gorge, Skrikes Wood and another site in the Beverley area during early May. A singing male trapped in Hackfall Wood on 1st May had been ringed as a nestling on 20th June 2007 at Brignall Banks, Barnard Castle; six young eventually fledged from the male’s nest box. Of two pairs in boxes at West Tanfield, one failed and the other reared six young. Two pairs were also at Guisecliffe and in late May, two reported from both Dallowgill and Grimes Gill.

The first in South Yorkshire was at Edderthorpe Flash on 21st April. In the Sheffield area there are small numbers in the west of the region and numbers appeared similar to previous years. A pair occupied a nest box at Broomhead and two pairs bred in Cliff Wood, Langsett. Two males were present in a wood at Stainland in June.

Some post-breeding birds passed through East Yorkshire, including one at Pulfen & High Eske NR on 30th July and two at Keld on 6th August. The majority were continental drift migrants on the coast. Coastal passage in spring was light. One was in Kilnsea from 30th April to 1st May, with 15 bird-days recorded at Spurn by 1st June. Further north on the coast, six singles were recorded at Flamborough between 27th April and 29th May but none at Filey. In the Scarborough district one was in Sycarham Wood on 27th May and another on Castle Hill on 29th. An intriguingly plumaged first-summer male at South Gare on 29th May showed possible influence from the Collared Flycatcher *F. albicollis* gene pool.

Autumn passage was heavier. The first returning bird at Spurn was on 27th July, with a total passage of 213 bird-days including the last on 15th October. Peak counts were in mid-September, with 23 on 15th the highest. At Flamborough passage began on 21st August but there was a marked September passage with 182 bird/days to 26th, with 18 on 7th, 39 on 13th, 17 on 17th and 12 on 23rd. Two were noted at Speeton from 31st August to 2nd September, two on 14th, three on 19th and singles on 16th, 18th and 27th, with five at Buckton on 17th. At Filey, birds were seen on 16 days between 17th August and 25th September with the highest count six on 17th August. There were frequent small falls in September in the Scarborough area with three on 7th and last on 15th at Castle Hill and the same fall further north produced 11 between Hawsker and Ness Point on 7th, 20 at South Gare and eight on Hunt Cliff on 6th September, and 12 at Locke Park, Redcar on 7th.

BEARDED TIT *Panurus biarmicus* **A**

Amber list: scarce and local resident breeder; occasional irruptive immigrant

One hundred years ago this reedbed specialist was confined to East Anglia but although susceptible to cold weather, the population is thought to be stable. Largely resident, it is prone to eruptive or cold weather movements. The expansion of reedbeds along the banks of the Humber may encourage the population to spread from Blacktoft Sands.

At Blacktoft Sands RSPB 100–120 pairs had a moderate breeding season producing between 300 and 450 young. First brood production was probably relatively successful due to reasonable weather and apparently good numbers of chironomids (first young seen on the 10th May) as was the second brood mainly due to plenty of Wainscot caterpillars being available although success may have been limited by heavy rain in early June. Third brood success may have being limited however due to a wet July and a seemingly poor supply of insects; 247 wintered in the reedbed during December.

Elsewhere a single visited Brough on 13th January, three were seen at Faxfleet on 10th February, one was at Wheldrake on 24th February, Tophill Low hosted two on 9th May and 12 were seen in the reedbed on the Humber near Welton Water between 14th and 19th October with four nearby on 22nd.

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus* **A**

Common resident except on high ground in west

BBS 52/204: +64% (+6) 1994–2008, +36% (+13) 2007–08

A strong recovery this year from the disasters of 2007 and the long-term trend remains upwards. The BTO CES survey reported productivity was 43% up on the long-term average. Small numbers are increasingly seen visiting bird tables in gardens. Large post-breeding flocks later in the year were evidence of the successful breeding season, and parties of 30+ birds were not uncommon. Nesting activity noted as early as mid-March with young appearing by mid-May.

It was widespread in East Yorkshire, with flocks including 26 at Atwick in November. Increasing observations from Spurn reflect its growing abundance: 113 birds were ringed and the bird/day total between 13th October and 9th December was 231.

Although common away from the higher ground in North Yorkshire, the largest count in Upper Wharfedale was 28 at Beecroft Plantation in July. Counts of up to 20 were recorded from Lingham Lake and 22 at Farnham GP in the Harrogate area, 50 at Ripon Parks in November, 30 at Little Studley, and 32 at Stewart Park, Middlesbrough and Scaling Dam further east. At Flatts Lane CP, nine of 14 nests were predated. Records from the Cononley area are typical: probable breeding pairs were noted at 14 sites, with several double figure counts in January and relatively high numbers in post-breeding flocks from September, with 22+ at Cononley Brow, 24 at Cononley Ings and 30 at Milkin Hill. It was present but under-recorded in the Scarborough area, with breeding only noted at two sites. A post-breeding party of 45 passed through Filey CP on 27th October, and 60 were recorded at Fairburn Ings RSPB on 21st September.

In the Leeds area, winter counts of up to 60 were noted in Temple Newsham Woods and parties of up to 26 at Eccup Res. In the Bradford area 32 were at Caldene Fields and 30 in a Keighley garden.

It was widely reported throughout the south except on the high moors, with many counts of 20+ early in the year, including 25 at Ulley CP in February, where up the six pairs bred. Maximum counts in the Worsbrough Valley were 28 in January and 37 in February. Up to 80 recorded at Old Moor on several occasions during February and 55 in four parties at Potteric Carr in January. At the special study site in the Rivelin Valley 51 full grown and 117 *pulli* ringed, with ten re-traps. High autumn counts included 32 at Thorpe Marsh and 35 at Thorne Moors in October, 46 at Strines/Dale Dike Res in November, and 35 at Potteric Carr in December.

BLUE TIT *Cyanistes caeruleus* **A**

Abundant and widespread resident; uncommon passage migrant

BBS 159/204: +17% (+4) 1994–2008, –10% (–5) 2007–08

There has been a substantial population increase since 1994, but this was the second year in a row where a slight decrease was noted. The BTO CES survey reported that productivity was down 41% on the long-term average, which itself has been declining: the population increase may be due to improved winter survival. The wet summer weather for a second successive year appears to have had a detrimental effect on numbers in the county, with the number of post-breeding flocks of more than 20 birds much reduced.

Typical results came from Gledhow Valley Woods in the Leeds area. Egg laying was thought to be typical in numbers and timing, but regular chick deaths indicated a food shortage at the crucial time with wet weather in June and July, when young birds were fledging thought likely to have affected survival. In total, 101 young

fledged from 26 boxes, with broods sizes from one (in six nests) to eight, but 14 boxes with young in them failed completely. At Rodley NR, only 12 nest boxes were used this year, compared to 23 in 2007.

In Mid Wharfedale (the Washburn and around Middleton Woods), 37 nest boxes were occupied but the number of eggs/nest was 8.11, down on last year's 8.35. The numbers of fledged young/nest were even worse than those for Great Tits, at 5.65 *cf.* 6.79 and were the worst productivity during the 5 years for which nest records have been available at this site. Notable counts from the Harrogate area included 40 in the Low Laithe/Summerbridge area on 24th November and 50 regularly attended the High Batts NR feeders during the winter months. Breeding success in boxes at the Central Science Laboratories, Sand Hutton, was similar to 2007: 6 nest-boxes: 21 chicks fledged from 47 eggs (45%) (2007: 6nb; 21chicks; 46 eggs (46%)). However, ringing totals at Filey were only 38% less than the previous year. One of the highest post-breeding counts was of 90 birds at Fairburn Ings on 23rd August.

In East Yorkshire 17–18 pairs bred at Tophill Low (*cf.* 39 occupied boxes in 2005), but a healthy nine pairs bred at Spurn, mostly successfully: the highest count there was 30 in June. This species was widely recorded in South Yorkshire, with some large winter flocks, but poor breeding success was noted. Nevertheless, many family parties were among 50 birds at Wharnccliffe on 26th June, a favoured site in the Barnsley area.

GREAT TIT *Parus major* **A**
Abundant and widespread resident; uncommon passage migrant
BBS 137/204: +77% (+43) 1994–2008, –37% (–1) 2007–08

The strong increase of this sedentary species in the county since 2000 was reversed this year in the BBS data. Nevertheless, it seemed to fare slightly better than Blue Tit.

There were no comments on status received from VC 61. Five pairs bred successfully at Spurn, with the highest count 35 in June. A count of 40 at High Batts NR on 9th December was the only significant record received from the Harrogate area. In Mid Wharfedale, from 37 occupied nest boxes in the Washburn and Middleton Woods areas, the number of eggs/nest was 6.97, only very slightly higher than last year (6.94), but the young produced/nest was significantly less than the disastrous 2007, i.e. 5.16 *cf.* 6.24. Breeding success at Central Science Laboratories, Sand Hutton, was low although better than 2007: seven nest-boxes – 10 chicks fledged from ~39 eggs (26%) (2007: 8; 0; ~39 (0%)). In the Cononley area very few juveniles were seen in July and August suggesting that this species may have had a poor breeding season. However, the longer-term increase in this species was noted in the Leeds area: in north Leeds about 100 pairs were located in the same area as 110 pairs of Blue Tit. In Gledhow Valley Woods 75 young fledged from 17 nests, six nests having failed with young in them, whilst at Rodley NR 16 nest boxes were used this year compared to 17 last year, so breeding numbers remained stable here compared to an almost 50% reduction for Blue Tit. Thirty-three were counted in Bretton Park in February.

In the Sheffield area winter numbers were lower than previous years, although 42 were noted at Agden Res in February. Breeding was reported widely from woodland areas. From 11 ringed broods the average was 5.8, substantially higher than the previous year's 4.0, but numbers in post-breeding flocks were also low, with no counts above 17. It was relatively scarce compared to Blue Tit in the Barnsley area, although counts from suitable sites included 34 in Bretton Park, 25 at Wharnccliffe and 17 in Wortley Park.

COAL TIT *Periparus ater* **A**
Common resident and passage migrant in small numbers. BBS 43/204

The nationally increasing, sedentary race *britannicus* is thinly distributed throughout. Common wherever there are conifers, but frequently appears in gardens.

This species breeds in suitable habitat in East Yorkshire, including within Hull, but is rare on the coast, and 12 at Atwick on 7th November was unusual. There were just three records at Spurn: singles on 30th March and 9th to 11th October (trapped, a British race bird), and three on 17th October. Similarly, one was noted in Easington on 19th March and two on 26th September.

It appears to be increasing in the Harrogate area with 22 ringed at High Batts NR and 12 at Sharow Grange during the year. In the Bradford area, 55 passed through Paul Clough in October, including 30 on 8th. Further east, it is very common in the forests of the North York Moors where the breeding success was high, but it appears that many of the juveniles left the forests: 44 juveniles were trapped at Filey, when only a handful are usually caught. Twenty-one chicks fledged from 42 eggs laid in nest boxes at Central Science Laboratories, Sand Hutton. A single showing characteristics of the continental race was present on the south side of Castle Hill, Scarborough on 29th May (NWA). Other coastal migrants included: five at Castle Hill on 26th and 12 at Boulby on 30th September, 34 present in the Filey area on 15th October and a single at South Gare on 16th October.

It appears to be very common in South Yorkshire, especially in the plantations along the Pennines, and there were numerous reports received from garden feeding stations. Numbers in the Upper Derwent Valley were higher than usual, with a maximum of 50 on 28th January and numerous double-figure counts elsewhere at this time. Breeding was reported from more sites than previous years, with some large summer flocks including 84 in Wharnccliffe Wood in June.

WILLOW TIT *Poecile montana* **A**
Red list and UK BAP species: uncommon and declining resident, scarce in the east. BBS 5/204

Nationally the British sedentary race *kleinschmidtii* of this boreal Palearctic species has decreased by 68% 1994–2008. Only six birds were counted in BBS squares this year in the county (13 in 2006).

In East Yorkshire, it breeds in suitable habitat to the west of the Wolds, such as at Saltmarshe Delph. A single was at Allertorpe Wood on 3rd March and one at Southfield Res on 17th April. Sightings are now rare east of the Wolds: one was at Watton from 29th March to 6th April and one at Pulfin and High Eske on 13th September. Two were at Danes Dyke South, Flamborough on 28th December.

This species appears to be in severe decline in the Harrogate area, and none recorded in Upper Wharfedale. Up to two recorded from the willow wood at Staveley NR in most months of the year and other reports were from High Skelding on 16th April, Nosterfield NR on 2nd and 14th December and one at Marton–cum–Grafton on 25th December. Elsewhere, one was at Timble Ings on 10th February and one at Ripon Parks on 31st December. Further east in the Scarborough area, there were just a scattering of isolated records: a few singles noted in the Vale of Pickering, including two at Wykeham Lakes on 23rd February and one was in East Ayton on 14th April. A family party of six were present at Willerby on 8th September. Other sightings came from Flotmanby, Ravenscar, Ganton, Dalby Forest and one at Forge Valley feeders on 28th December. Two were at Margrove Ponds on 30th April but all other records from the very north were outside the breeding season: singles at Scaling Dam on 6th January, Croft–on–Tees on three dates in March, Errington Wood on 15th March, Brotton from 31st August to 18th September and Coatham Marsh on 6th October. Further south, four were seen at Skipwith Common in February, two at Allertorpe Common, two at Askham Bog and three at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd February. Singles were also noted at CSL, Pocklington Canal at Bielby, Coates Bridge, Copmanthorpe and Calley Heath. Four were present at Castle Howard on 8th August, four at Kexby on 26th November and ten were on Allertorpe Common on 28th November.

Five pairs bred at Fairburn Ings and thinly distributed along the Aire Valley near Leeds, with up to two between Knostrop and Swillington Ings through the year; other records came from Adel Dam, Alwoodley, Bardsey, Gallow's Hill, Ox Close Wood and Rodley NR. Family parties found at Woodlesford Goit and Lemonroyd during BTO Atlas surveying. At Pugney's CP, it may possibly breed, although only recorded outside the breeding season. It was noted as absent from a regular site in Ossett this year but five pairs bred at Winterset. In the Halifax area, noted at Bretton Park, Deffer Wood, Elland GP, Horbury Strands, Ingbirchworth Res where breeding confirmed, Royd Moor Res, Scout Dike Res, where it also bred, and Stocksmoor Common NR.

This species was reported from 44 localities in the Sheffield area, including north Derbyshire, (*cf.* 53 in 2007; 52 in 2006), almost exclusively in the east of the area, although breeding was proven from more locations. In the early months six were at Ulley CP on 1st January. Post-breeding numbers were similar to the previous year, with a maximum of six at Thrybergh CP on 30th June but numbers to the end of the year appeared down. It was present at several localities along the Rother Valley, including Aldwarke SF, Collier Brooke, Dinnington Marsh, Fatty Boyns Pond, Firsby Res, Kiveton Park Colliery, Meadowgate Lake NR, Thrybergh CP and Tip, Treeton Dyke and Ulley CP. The population in the Barnsley area appears to be holding up except in the Worsbrough Valley, with a maximum at Old Moor of 11 in February. Three pairs bred at Carlton Marsh, two at Edderthorpe Flash, two at Wilthorpe Flash, several pairs in the Grimethorpe area, and single pairs at Goldthorpe and in the Worsbrough Valley, while two birds were seen regularly at Thorpe Marsh and four towards the year end. The highest day count at Potteric Carr was seven on 13th April, but less frequent at feeding stations in the second half of the year, with only one or two occasionally seen. This is in contrast to 2007 when ten pairs were found during a breeding population survey.

MARSH TIT *Poecile palustris* **A**
Red list and UK BAP species: uncommon resident, scarce in south-east and south-west. BBS 5/204

This Palearctic species prefers mature broad-leaved woodland. There was a smaller national decrease 1994–2008 of 23% compared to the previous species, but it had identical statistics in BBS this year.

In VC 61 it is most frequently seen in woodland on the Wolds and its fringes, both to the east and west. For instance, it was reported as breeding at Drewton and in North Cliffe and Houghton Woods to the west, and near Beswick in the east. In winter, birds can wander from the strongholds on the Wolds: for instance up to three were noted at Welton Waters in January and February. The first at Spurn since 2004 was a single trapped at the Point on 6th May.

It is thinly distributed in North Yorkshire including Cleveland, with breeding confirmed or strongly suspected at Flatts Lane CP, Skelton Castle, Saltburn Gill and Weary Bank and Glaisdale. In the Harrogate area, a pair was nest building at Staveley NR on the early date of 16th February. Maximum counts were ten at High Batts NR on 30th January and 10th October, with 18 ringed at this site during the year. Elsewhere a single at Hay-a-Park GP on 28th June was an unusual record for the site; also reported from Coyningham Hall, Knaresborough, Ripon Parks and Fountains Abbey. Few noted in Upper Wharfedale, with just one in a Beamsley garden in September, although Birks Wood is a regular site. One was at Beaverdyke Dam on three dates. In the York area, a pair bred in a nest box at the Central Science Laboratories, Sand Hutton, fledging seven chicks and at Askham Bog. It was noted as widespread in the Scarborough area including Low North Camp, Ebberston, Langdale Forest, Dalby Forest, Broxa Forest and Forge Valley, where easily viewed at the feeding station. Further south, one at Filey on 20th and 21st September was the only record of the year from that site.

Present in the Leeds area but most records were of single birds. Records came from Temple Newsam Woods, Hetchell Crag, Yeadon Tarn, Ox Close Wood, East Keswick and a family party seen in West Woods. Further west the only regular site in the Bradford area is Haverah Park, with a single present there on four occasions.

It is a rare bird in South Yorkshire and there were no records for the county in the Sheffield Report. In the Rotherham area seen mostly in the environs of Roche Abbey between January and March and from September, but the only breeding season record was from Lindrick GC. In the Barnsley area a single bird was found in the wooded hillside adjacent to Worsbrough Road on 1st April, paired with a Willow Tit, and was watched excavating a nest-hole in a rotten Silver Birch stump one to two metres from the ground on 4th April. The eggs were later deserted, but the Marsh Tit was still present on 1st July (CRD: GJ *et al.*).



Marsh Tit ◉
Jonathan Pomroy

NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea* A

Uncommon to fairly common resident, scarce in south-east. BBS 19/204

A very sedentary West Palearctic species that has increased nationally. Casual observations and BBS suggest it has been expanding its range in the county, but has yet to colonise the south-east.

In VC 61 it breeds in the Malton area around Birdsall and Howsham. One was in Flatmere at Flamborough on 3rd June (the fourth record for Flamborough) and one was seen at the Warren at Spurn the next day, while another on 24th June was present at the Warren before flying north.

Further north, present in the Cleveland area, with seven in Stewart Park on 7th January the highest count, and breeding confirmed from Skelton Castle but presumed at Guisborough, Saltburn and along the Leven. Now noted regularly in woodland in the Scarborough area and increasingly present in the town's suburbs. It is fairly common in the Harrogate area: notable records included 11 in the Low Laithe/Summerbridge area on 24th November and a pair bred in a nest box at Fountains Abbey with six young being ringed. There were regular sightings at the High Batts NR feeders, usually involving two birds, but three caught and ringed on 30th November. This species appears to be doing well throughout most of Wharfedale and the Washburn although there were no records from Grimwith: typically recorded at between 35 and 40 sites, and this year recorded from Otley for the first time. The highest count was of 14 at Bolton Abbey in April. Present at six sites in the Cononley area.

It was present in woods to the north of Leeds, but to the south, one at Swillington Park in December was the only record away from Temple Newsam Woods. Also breeds at Blackmoorfoot Res in Orange Wood and in the Bradford area at St Ives and Shipley Glen. Records were scarce at Winterset, but noted at some new sites in that area.

The range of this species continues to expand in the Sheffield area, especially to the north and east with records throughout the year. Breeding was confirmed at 17 sites (*cf.* 16 in 2007; ten in 2006). Recorded quite widely from the Rotherham area including at: Birch Wood, Bray Plantation, Clifton Park, Creighton Wood, Dean Plantation, Gibbing Greave Wood, Langold Lake, Roche Abbey, Swinton Common, near Ulley Res and Wentworth Park. Birds were present and assumed to have bred in all the mature woodlands and parklands of the Worsbrough Valley: nine males were holding territories at Bretton Lakes, a favoured site, with 20 recorded in Bretton Park in April. A wandering individual visited Black Carr Wood at Potteric Carr on 31st March.

TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris* A

Fairly common resident, absent from higher ground. BBS 16/204

The sedentary British population of the race *britannica* is probably stable in the county, following national trends, with occasional migrants of the nominate form in autumn on the coast. Numbers were possibly down this year.

It is thinly distributed throughout East Yorkshire, including coastal woodlands at Flamborough, Hornsea and Holmpton. It is only a passage bird at Spurn, where singles were trapped and ringed on 15th and 17th October, the latter remaining the next day.

Around Cleveland it is also described as thinly distributed but appears fairly common in the Harrogate area: maximum counts were four at Gouthwaite Res on 13th January and four in the Low Laithe/Summerbridge area on 24th November. In Upper Wharfedale, records were at only 80% of 2007 levels, perhaps a consequence of the poor breeding season the previous year. Presumed migrants on Castle Hill, Scarborough were noted on 23rd September and 14th October and Boulby on 26th September.

Common in South Yorkshire in the Sheffield, Rotherham and Barnsley areas, although numbers in the earlier part of the year were noted as generally low.

GOLDEN ORIOLE *Oriolus oriolus* A

2,8,3,2,17

Red list: rare passage migrant mainly in spring: bred in 1992

This species maintains a small breeding population in East Anglia, at the western edge of its range that extends from Morocco north to southern Norway and east to Mongolia. Spring records could include overshooting British birds, but are more likely to be of continental origin. There was an unusually large influx of migrants in May this year, some of which may have been mobile enough to be observed in more than one location, but no autumn birds.

The first was a male by the radar station on Sunk Island on 7th May (JW), followed by a singing male at Flamborough at Millennium Wood from 10th–13th (AMa *et al.*). A male flew south at Spurn on 10th but later returned north to Kilnsea (AJS *et al.*). Another singing male was in Old Fall Plantation, Flamborough on 13th (PAL). The first immature/female was by Long Bank Marsh, Easington on 17th and 20th, with presumably the same between Kilnsea and Sammy's Point on 21st and again by Long Bank on 22nd (AHu: SJ *et al.*) An immature male was along the peninsula at Spurn from 23rd to 31st May and last seen flying north over Sammy's Point on the latter date (AAH *et al.*). On 28th a green bird was seen at the north end of Beacon Lane, Kilnsea, and later at Kew, flying south the next morning (DH: RT *et al.*). On 29th one was found at Ness Point, Robin Hood's Bay, (AF). Birds continued to arrive on 30th, with one again at Stone Creek (JW) and an adult male at Chalk Bank, Spurn (CG).

Spurn continued its run in June, with a first-summer male at the Point from 1st to 4th (RT), an adult male at Wire Dump on 4th before flying south (JAB) and one was singing in the Crown & Anchor car park on 5th before flying south (PCo), and one flew north up Beacon Lane on 6th (NP). Also on 5th, a male was in Flatmere at Flamborough (PAL), and a female visited South Landing on 6th (PAL). On 14th, one was found on Yearsley Moor by Redcar House.

BROWN SHRIKE *Lanius senator* A

0,0,0,0,1

Vagrant; first county record

It breeds from south Siberia east to north Japan and through east China. Nominate *cristatus* winters in the Indian subcontinent and SE Asia.

The first for Yorkshire was an adult male *cristatus*, found in Old Fall Hedge, Flamborough on 24th September (AMA *et al.*). Fortunately for many grateful observers, it remained in the general area the following day and at times sat side by side with a Red-backed Shrike. Previous records have come from Kerry, Scillies and Shetland, so a mainland bird on the east coast was particularly welcome.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius collurio* 19,12,14,11,46

Red list and UK BAP species: scarce passage migrant; formerly bred

This species is now extinct in Britain, but breeds from Portugal north to Scandinavia and east to western Siberia, with birds migrating via the eastern Mediterranean to winter in Africa.

There was a good spring passage this year. The first, a male found at Sammy's Point on 21st May, was still present on 22nd. This was shortly followed by another male on 24th that frequented moorland at Stoupe Brow near Ravenscar. There was a fall of six birds at Spurn on 27th with two males on the peninsula, one of which remained to 28th, a male at the Warren and a male and two females in the Triangle, one of the females remaining to 30th. A male was also found at South Landing, Flamborough Head on 27th and was still present on 28th, when two females were present on the Outer Head and another at Buckton. Yet another male was then found at Filey at Parish Wood Tip on 28th remaining to 29th, and a male and two females were at Long Bank, Easington. One was at Coatham Marsh on 29th and one at South Gare on 30th, when a male was found in Canal Hedge, Spurn; another male in Peter's Lane, Easington; a female at Sammy's Point and a female in Booted Gully east of South Landing, Flamborough. The 31st was the turn of the Scarborough area with a male found on the south side of Castle Hill and another at Old Scarborough Tip, Scalby and a new bird was seen at Coatham Marsh.

In June, two males were present on 1st in the Canal Zone at Spurn and another male north of the Gas Terminal, Easington on 1st and 2nd. On 2nd new arrivals included one at South Gare and two at Cowbar, a female at Sammy's Point, Easington, a male trapped and ringed at Spurn at the Warren and a female found at post 67, with both the Spurn birds still present on 4th. A male was in Old Fall at Flamborough also on 4th.

In autumn the first migrants arrived in late August with one at Filey on 29th and a juvenile at the Warren at Spurn on 30th. The next was not until 7th and 8th September when an immature was present at South Gare, then on 14th a juvenile was found at Spurn in the Triangle that remained to 9th October, and another juvenile also on 14th at Sammy's Point, Easington that remained to 17th. A second juvenile joined the bird in the Triangle, Spurn from 21st to 1st October and another was found at the north end of the gas terminal, Easington on 21st remaining on 22nd and presumed the same seen again on 27th. Also on 22nd, one was seen near Old Fall, Flamborough Head and on 25th one was found at the Point at Spurn and one by the Chalet Hedge at Flamborough that moved to the Gorse Field on 26th and 27th. A first-winter was found on 14th October at Old Fall, Flamborough and later presumably the same bird was at Northcliff Marsh on 15th and 16th.



Red-backed Shrike •
John Grist

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor* A 11,18,3,7,21

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor

This species breeds from Scandinavia eastwards through to North America, with birds moving south in winter. It occurs as a coastal passage bird in the county, but small numbers also winter inland in Britain. This was the best showing since 2003.

Early winter records included one present briefly in a garden in Glaisdale on 3rd January, one in Langdale Forest on 23rd January and one seen at North Duffield Carrs on 28th February. April again provided an upsurge in records starting with a single on Rackford Lane, North Anston on 3rd, followed by one picked up dead in Armroid Lane, Hoyland the following day. In the east of the county there were singles at Old Scarborough Tip, Scalby on 15th, Scaling Dam from 17th–22nd and Foxholes on 19th April.

It was a good autumn, with seven recorded in the Spurn area alone. The first coastal immigrants were two seen at Spurn on 24th September, both birds ranging widely, one remaining to 27th and the other to 2nd October. A third bird joined these on 25th, remaining to 27th, and one was found in Easington on 25th, and presumed the same bird by Easington Lagoon on 26th and 27th. Surprisingly there were no October records, but November heralded another influx. One was mobile along the south side of the Headland between Old Fall and Booted Gully from 1st–4th November, one at Filey briefly in Top Scrub on 3rd and inland one was feeding along the western boundary hedge at Nosterfield NR on 7th November and in bushes on the Reserve's silt lagoons on 8th. One was in Easington on Vicar's Lane on 7th and presumably the same by the graveyard and ponds on 8th that flew south towards the Narrows at Spurn on 9th, where a new bird was already present between posts 42 and 45. The North York Moors forests provided fruitful hunting grounds, with a bird found in Wykeham Forest on 15th that remained to the year-end and two more in Langdale Forest: one at Blakey Topping and one at Maw Rigg, the first being seen on 30th November, 14th, 17th and 22nd December, and the second on 6th, 14th and 30th December. In South Yorkshire, one was reported from Thornseat Delf near Bradfield Moors on 7th December.

WOODCHAT SHRIKE *Lanius senator* A 0,1,0,1,3

Rare migrant; 30 previous records

Breeds from France and north-west Africa east to southern Iran, wintering in Africa south of the Sahara.

A first-summer male showed well at South Anston on the afternoon of 5th May (DT *et al.*). More typically on 8th May another first-summer male was located at Spurn, remaining in the Canal Scrape area until 10th (PCo: AAH *et al.*). Another exceptional inland find was subsequently photographed at Noah Dale Farm, Soyland near Ripponden in West Yorkshire on 24th July (OD).

JAY *Garrulus glandarius* A

Fairly common resident, and scarce migrant, absent from high ground. BBS 23/204

A combination of its secretive nature allied to its preference for large oak woodlands tends to restrict records although it has also benefitted from commercial afforestation. Lack of habitat means it is scarcer at the coast, but irruptive movements sometimes occur in autumn. In contrast to last year there was no autumn influx of migrants and none recorded from inland visible migration watches.

In East Yorkshire it occurs west of the Wolds in suitable habitat, but it is scarce in the east, with records from Beswick and Wassand. At Spurn, it was only recorded in spring, where there were four records of single birds (possibly the same individual) that reached the Warren between 27th April and 9th May, and on the latter occasion the bird surrendered and was trapped and ringed.

This species is widespread in suitable habitat throughout North Yorkshire and is certainly under-reported. However, it appears to be thinly distributed in Cleveland, with most records from the east, and a best of five at Flatts Lane CP. One at Scalby on 18th October may have been an immigrant. The highest counts in the Harrogate area were six at Hay-a-Park GP on 20th April and seven at Staveley NR on 28th September. In Upper Wharfedale, nine were at Coney Warren, Barden Fell, on 10th November. There were records from seven sites in the Cononley area.

In the Sheffield area the majority of records came from the east, but it was recorded throughout the area in small numbers. Though often secretive during the breeding season, breeding was confirmed at nine sites. Also noted as common in the Rotherham area with Ulley CP a particular stronghold; seven were recorded there in February and July and ten in October. It is thinly distributed across the Barnsley area, with ten the highest count from Worsbrough Valley in October.

MAGPIE *Pica pica* A

Common resident. BBS 96/204: -19 (-2) 1994–2008, -25% (0) 2007–08

After massive increases since the mid-1960s, the trend in BBS appears to be downwards and after last year's temporary increase, this year saw a further decrease. Nevertheless, this species has become well-adapted to urban and suburban life. It is widespread in the county except from managed moorlands in the west where it is still regarded as a pest and where nesting habitat is unavailable.

Widespread in East Yorkshire, there were no reports of murders or tittering greater than 20 birds. Seen in all parts of the Harrogate and Scarborough districts except the moorlands: the highest count in the Harrogate area was 22 at Farnham GP on 22nd January, but double-figure counts are quite commonplace in Cleveland. A gathering of 112 going to roost at Flatts Lane CP on 16th January is particularly noteworthy.

The largest counts from Cononley were 20 birds at Cononley Ings in October and 18 at Snaygill Ings in December. The Gledhow Valley Woods roost, near Leeds, appeared to be in decline, with maximum counts of 85 at the west end and 65 at the east end. Up to 40 birds noted at Rodley NR, up to 30 at Yeadon Tarn and up to 20 at several other sites. At least 40 birds roosted at Queensbury in December.

It was widespread in South Yorkshire, though tended to be scarcer in the west, particularly where corvids are controlled because of shooting interests but more numerous in suburban and lowland areas further east. High counts include 70 at Catcliffe Flash on 24th January and 120 there on 15th November, 47 at Potteric Carr in January and 50 at Treeton Dyke and 35 at Carlton Marsh both in March.

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula* **A**

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

BBS 115/204: +67% (+37) 1994–2008, –38% (+5) 2007–08

The resident British race *spermologus* is particularly numerous in North Yorkshire and on upland margins in South and West Yorkshire, and although counts were generally lower than 2007, the overall upwards trend is particularly notable in Yorkshire. There were reports from all areas of the county, with the exception of the moorland plateau. Large gatherings were regularly reported from breeding colonies, roost sites and feeding parties on farmland, with no evidence of any change in status.

There were few counts reported in VC 61, but 4200 went to roost in D Wood at Tophill Low in November and December, 850 congregated at Kelk on 9th September and 800 gathered pre-roost at Ruston Parva on 19th November. At Spurn spring passage saw 508 fly south and 255 U-turn back north between 4th February and 5th June. The highest count was 83 on 29th March. On 27th a bird attributed to the nominate race was at Flamborough. Autumn passage was very light at Spurn, and of the 90 that flew south, 80 tracked through on 1st November. A ‘Nordic’ bird present from 1st–3rd November was trapped and ringed on 3rd.

In the north-east, 200 were at Levisham in January, 1200 at Upper Egton Banks and 300 at Scaling Dam in February, and counts of 300 were noted at Harl Moor and Yarm towards the year-end. In the Scarborough area, 70 were at Ravenscar on 14th April, and 490 flew south-east over Hackness at dusk on 4th July. The highest count in the Filey area was 450 pre-roost at Reighton on 27th September. Seamer Tip recorded individuals showing characters of the Nordic race on two occasions: two on 27th March and one on 30th December.

Noted as one of the most obvious birds in Upper Wharfedale, with large flocks running into hundreds, often mixed with Rooks, noted as “everywhere in winter”. High counts in the Harrogate district included 450 in the Gouthwaite area on 4th February and 600 were flushed by a Peregrine at Staveley NR on 19th August. The largest count however, was of 2000 near Darley on 7th October. Elsewhere, 200 were at Cononley Ings in October. In the Leeds area, the larger flocks were 350 birds on Eccup Moor in February and up to 200 birds at Rodley NR. Blackmoorfoot hosted 330 on 31st January, with 213 at Swinsty Res in October. In South Yorkshire, three-figure counts included 250 at High Green and 140 at Chevet Park, Winterset in February, c.400 in stubble at Millhouse Green in July, 400 at Potteric Carr in August and 300 there in December, and 200 at Wentworth Park in November and December.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus* **A**

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

BBS 108/204: –60% (0) 1994–2008, –31% (–6) 2007–08

The local populations of this Eurasian species are mostly resident, but form communal winter roosts. The long-term population trend is worryingly downwards, and counts were slightly down again this year.

Large counts in East Yorkshire included 1000 at Kelk in January and 1500 there from September to December, 1400 at Tophill Low and 400 at Ruston Parva in November. At Spurn in spring a total of 381 flew south and 52 U-turned back north between 6th February and 7th June. Autumn passage was light: 69 flew south, 74 U-turned, and two came in off the sea between 29th August and 13th November, with a high count of 47 on 13th November. A few birds were seen to come in off the sea at Flamborough.

Large counts from North Yorkshire included 800 at the Central Science Laboratories near York in November, 500 at Primrose Hill in December, 400 near Gaterley in February and 200 at Scaling Dam in January. The rookery at High Batts NR, which holds around 60 nests, contained 50 birds on 19th March with 200 noted there on 24th September. Two counts received from the Scarborough area: 150 near Scalby Lodge Pond on 16th October and 1000 south near Thornton-le-Dale in the early morning of 10th November.

The number of occupied nests at monitored sites in the Cononley area was 19 at Netherghyll Lane, Cononley; 32 at Carleton Road, Skipton; a minimum of eight at Lothersdale Crossroads; a minimum of 30 at Whitegate Farnhill and 54 at Ravenshaw, Carleton.

A healthy population was reported from the Bradford area, but a serious decline in numbers has been noted in the Wakefield area and numbers at Pugney’s CP were down to single figures. No change of status was noted in the Sheffield area. A small rookery was noted in electricity pylons at Aldwarke. In the Rotherham area there were 300 at Spa House Farm in March and 300 at Wentworth Park in December. In the Barnsley area a good breeding season was reported with an increase in occupied nests counted at several sites. For instance, the rookery at Bell Bank Wood held 25 nests (up from 22 last year), the Stocksbridge colony had 80 occupied nests (up from 65 last year), the first increase at this site since 1999, with c.70 pairs at Thurnscoe (up from 60+ last year). The area’s maximum count came from Old Moor with 1200 present on 10th July.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone* **A**

Abundant and widespread resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

BBS 181/204: +96% (+18) 1994–2008, +8% (+2) 2007–08

Has become one of the county’s most widespread birds, possibly due to a reduction in keeping activity, and increasingly noted in urban areas. It is still largely absent from managed moorland areas. Large gatherings are not uncommon.

Widespread and common in East Yorkshire, but there were no large counts received. In North Yorkshire 200 were at Burton Leonard in January, 80 were seen in a pre-roost assembly at Staveley NR and 50 by Ripon Canal in February, while 83 were in fields near Scalby Lodge Pond on 23rd April. In Upper Wharfedale, this species continues to increase on the moors, despite game keeping interests. A roost at Haverah Park near Bradford contained an exceptional 1000 on 15th August. The highest count in the Cononley area came from Cononley Ings with 50 on 28th September. Counts of 100 were noted at Honley in September and 101 at Meltham Mills in November. Further east, 800 were at Beal Carrs, near Selby, on 6th January, 1250 on 24th October, and up to 750 in December. Smaller gatherings were of up to 140 birds at Rodley NR and 50 at Yeadon Tarn.

In South Yorkshire, the largest flocks reported in the early months were of 100 at Ulley Brook in January, 75 at Silverwood Pit Tip and 50 at Ulley CP in February, and 40 at Barrow in April, with post-breeding groups in August including 43 at Thrybergh CP and 40 at Carr Vale NR. A corvid roost in Haw Park, Winterset during November and December attracted at least 2,000 birds, a significant proportion of which were this species. An albino bird appeared at Barrow on 2nd July, with probably the same at Elsecar Res on 9th November.

Passage was noted on the coast at Spurn where an excellent spring passage saw 497 flying south and four U-turning back north between 9th March and 29th May. Typically, the peak passage was in late April and early May when high counts 65 on 25th April and 63 on 2nd May. There was a high count of 120 at Flamborough on 24th April. In the autumn, just 42 flew south at Spurn between 27th September and 17th October, including a high count of 15 on 27th September. Flamborough recorded an impressive 122 on 20th November.

HOODED CROW *Corvus cornix* **A**

9,6,3,9,19

Rare visitor, usually on passage, with occasional winter records

Breeds in Ireland, the Isle of Man and north-west Scotland, but also in northern and central Europe, where the northern populations are migratory and no doubt account for sightings on the east coast.

This was a better year, with the first of a good spring passage at Flamborough on 30th March, then in April one near Scalby Lodge on 3rd, one flew north at Kilnsea also on 3rd; one flew north past the Narrows at Spurn on 8th; two flew past the seawatching point at Flamborough Head on 12th, with one seen nearby at the north end of Danes Dyke on 24th. On 26th one was in coastal fields between Aldbrough and East Newton. In May one was at Flamborough on 1st, two flew south at Spurn on 2nd, one was again at Scalby Lodge on 3rd, singles were at Spurn on 7th and 9th and an unusually late bird was at Top Scrub, Filey on 29th.

The first of the autumn was seen at Scaling Dam on 1st November, closely followed by one north at Spurn on 3rd. One found by Danes Dyke on 22nd November, in the same location as the April bird, remained in the area until the end of the year. Finally, one was present in fields just south of Seamer Tip on 29th and 30th December.

RAVEN *Corvus corax* **A**

Scarce but increasing resident in west, rare in east. BBS 6/204

This Holarctic species used to breed widely until persecution began 200 years ago. Retains a foothold in the west and recently has increased in the Yorkshire Dales.

There was an increase in verified records in the east of the county this year, although it is not certain how many individuals were involved. Unsubstantiated reports in the past have been treated very cautiously, but as numbers increase in the west, more sightings are likely to be received. One flew west over Nafferton on 2nd February and one came in off the sea at Flamborough at Northcliff on 12th. One flew north over Atwick on 27th March. The bird that flew west at Flamborough over New Fall on 2nd April was possibly the same bird seen flying south off the Warren at Spurn on 3rd, later returning north and last seen over Sammy’s Point. The tatty bird that flew north–west over the Triangle on 29th April is presumed to be different. This bird remained in fields at the north end of Beacon Lane, Kilnsea to 18th May. Also in May one was at Flamborough on 9th. Later in the year there was just a single record of one near Atwick on 13th November.

In the Yorkshire Dales the number of non–breeding birds continues to increase with regular sightings of up to six birds from many areas. Despite this increase, the number of nesting pairs remains low with 20 traditional sites checked but only eight were occupied, with 23 young fledged from seven successful sites. Five were in aerial combat with a Common Buzzard and Peregrine at Kilnsey on 26th September. There were reports from Barden in most months, with a peak of six during August and September; however, only recorded twice from Washburn although breeding proved at Littondale. In the Bradford area, noted at Thornton Moor and Ogden Water and the moors around Oxenhope and a single noted at Little Studley on 20th December.

There were just seven records from the higher ground in the Harrogate district and no proved breeding: two were near Bewerley on 28th March; one near Guisecliffe on 18th April; three near Scar House Res on 29th April and another over Great Whernside on 12th May. In the latter half of the year, there were two again at Scar House Res on 28th August, a single near Gouthwaite Dam on 18th October and finally two over Gouthwaite Res on 21st December. In the Cononley area one or two birds were reported on two dates in January, four in March and three in April with singles in May, September and on three dates in October. On the lower ground one was at Nosterfield NR on 6th June, one was photographed as it flew over Hilla Green in the Scarborough district on 26th August and one flew east at Fairburn Ings on 24th November.

Further south, noted at Blackmoorfoot on 3rd August and 13th December, and pairs were also present in the Halifax area at Isle of Skye Quarry where it bred, and possibly at Dovestones Res. In the Sheffield area there is continued evidence of increase and expansion, with many areas in the west now holding large numbers of non–breeders, indicating that the population has reached carrying capacity and records to the east increase each year. For instance, one flew south at Rother Valley CP on 29th March and two flew south–east at Roche Abbey on 7th October. In the Barnsley area numbers have not yet recovered to 2000 levels. All records except one came from upland areas where recorded in small numbers throughout the year, with five at Ewden Beck on 30th March and two pairs at Midhope on 28th April. The only lowland record was of one flying west over Elsecar on 9th April. The area’s only breeding attempt at Wharncliffe had failed by 15th April. Counts of up to five birds in the latter half of the year came from Howden Edge, Wharncliffe, Broomhead, Pike Lowe and Midhope.

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris* A
Red list and UK BAP species: abundant but decreasing resident, passage migrant and winter visitor
BBS 132/204: –47% (–39) 1994–2008, –23% (–14) 2007–08

British and north European populations have been declining and it has also been decreasing steadily in Yorkshire, and 2008 saw a further decrease in recording in BBS squares after the temporary increase in 2007.

Noteworthy counts in East Yorkshire included 800 near Foston–on–the–Wolds in January, 1250 near Pulfen and 1000 in Goole in February, 500 at Tophill Low in September, and a pre–roost flock of 800 at Ruston Parva in November. A roost of 10,000 was reported from Bridlington in December. At Spurn, 6916 flew south between 20th January and 13th May, with a peak count of 1355 on 1st April. Influxes also took place from late February to early April, including 1000 on 19th March and 1000 on 1st April. Passage at Flamborough was most obvious from 19th March to 1st April with up to 600 on six dates and 4000 on 27th March. Visible passage at Spurn in the autumn was light: just 1619 flew south and 4128 came in off the sea. Birds coming in off the sea started in late October, with 2350 on 29th, 490 on 30th and 470 on 7th November. Numbers of grounded birds remained quite low, generally below 200, with high counts of 800 on 30th October, 1000 on 1st and 1500 on 2nd November. Passage at Flamborough was also light, with up to 450 on five dates in September, while November had 500 on 20th. At Buckton, 300 were counted on 31st October and 700 on 7th November.

On 27th March 7000 went to roost on the cliffs at Filey. Nine came in off the sea at Long Nab, Scarborough on 29th October, and two days later 3000 roosted in Peasholm Park. At Whitestone Point, Whitby, 1378 came in off the sea in two hours on 2nd November. Three counts were made of the Scarborough Town centre roost in December: 800 on 11th and 20th, and 1000 on 22nd. Further inland, in the Harrogate area this species remains relatively widespread and common, but not widely reported away from roosts. A roost in reed beds at Staveley

NR held 1000 birds on 23rd July and 3000 in September. The Nosterfield Quarry reedbed held 11,000 on 11th July; 30,000 on 4th August; 25,000 on 24th September and 20,000 on 11th October. Elsewhere a flock of 2000 was foraging near Glasshouses between 22nd and 24th December. In the Bradford and Wharfedale areas, there were several larger flocks during November with 2000 at Draughton Heights, 1624 at Thornton Moor and 300 at Stainburn, Sandwith Moor and Timble Ings. In the Cononley area the largest flocks in the first winter months included 200 birds at Cononley Ings, 200 at Carleton Ings and 700 at Farnhill Ings in January. Up to 200 were noted at Cononley and Farnhill Ings in August and September with numbers increasing in October to a maximum of 400, and 600 were noted at Fairburn Ings on 1st November.

In the Leeds area up to 5000 birds were around the pigpens on Collingham Moor in winter, with up to 3000 roosting at Swillington Ings in November and up to 1000 feeding on Astley hillside in late summer. Near Pugney’s CP, a post–breeding flock of 2000 roosted on the Calder Wetlands. An estimated 10,000 were roosting in the Top Res reedbeds at Winterset on 25th October with numbers falling there to 5000 on 4th November and 350 during December. In the Halifax area, 1000 were at Penistone/Hartcliff Hill in February and 2500 were at Blackmoorfoot in November.

No large roosts were recorded in the Sheffield area, with counts in both winter periods in the 200–400 range including Silverwood Pit Tip and Blackburn Meadows. Similarly, in the Rotherham area the largest gatherings noted near Aughton in September and October were of flocks of 200 and 250. In the Barnsley area 1000 were noted at Hartcliffe Hall in February and 250 roosted at Winterset on May 31st. At Potteric Carr numbers roosting reached 400 in August. The first autumn visible migrants were 15 west at Redmires Res on 20th September with a total of 16,171 recorded. Passage peaked on 18th October with westerly movement of 1900 over Rother Valley CP, 400 over Thrybergh CP and 368 over Kings Wood. Other counts included 1395 north–west at Carr Vale NR and 2625 west at Redmires Res, both on 31st October. Large gatherings during this period included 950 grounded migrants in fields at Redmires Res with 500 at Agden Side and 500 roosting at Pit–house West on 8th November. At Scout Dike Res 1000 were present on 2nd November and 1200 were feeding on pasture near the Flouch Inn at Langsett on 7th and the roost at Potteric Carr held up to 500 during November.

ROSE–COLOURED STARLING *Sturnus roseus* A
Rare visitor in spring and summer; 70 previous records (71 birds)
1,7,1,0,2

This irruptive species breeds from south Ukraine and central Turkey east to Kazakhstan and Afghanistan, occasionally breeding in south–east Europe. Occasional overshooting adults occur in the county in late spring/early summer, and post–breeding juveniles in autumn.

An adult was photographed in a garden in Wetwang on 3rd June (Mr&Mrs GA Clark). More unusually, in autumn a juvenile visited bird feeders in Burniston from 24th–27th September (AFo *et al.*).

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus* A
Red list and UK BAP species: abundant resident but has decreased
BBS 101/204: –14 (–18) 1994–2008, –6% (0) 2007–08

Closely associated with older built–up areas and farms, this species continues to decline.

Despite the well–publicised population decline there is still little by way of detailed recording though the population in Guisborough is well–monitored and the BTO Atlas project has helped to identify some healthy populations. Rural locations have far fewer than more urban areas, with domestic gardens and allotments now hosting important numbers.

In the west still described as widespread in the Barnsley area and at least 30 juveniles were in a 60–strong flock in a garden at Low Moor, Bradford. Up to 70 were present at Hebden in Upper Wharfedale during the summer, with 86 at Yeadon Tarn in June. A single female at Rodley NR on 20th August was evidence of just how scarce the species is becoming in certain areas.

At the opposite side of the county, 30 visited feeders at either end of the year in Cottingham. Other notable counts included 70 at Flamborough on 21st March and 100 at Scalby on 1st August with 160 in the Scalby Manor area on 10th September. Spurn hosted 130 on 17th August with 84 present on 16th September. At Guisborough first broods were successful, although returns from second and third brood attempts were low.

Several flocks were noted around York including up to 40 at Rawcliffe Lake throughout the year. Up to 30 were at Strensall and 35 near Walbutts SW, Strensall on 22nd December. Maximum counts elsewhere included 33 at Bielby on 12th January, 40 at Pocklington on 17th May and 83 at Melbourne on 22nd May.

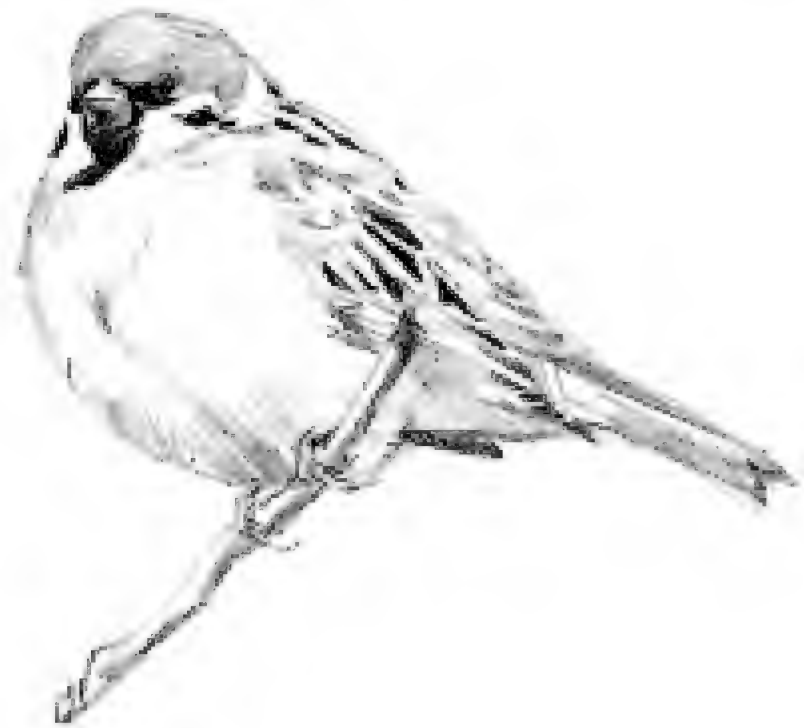
Coastal movement was limited, with a high count of just 17 south at Spurn on 22nd October.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus* A
Red list and UK BAP species: uncommon resident; very recent population recovery. BBS 47/204
After a population crash between the late 1970s and early 1990s, there has been a recent increase in numbers, particularly in the last three years.

High counts included up to 100 at Flamborough during the early months followed by 235 there on 12th October. There were 100 feeding on tipped seed at Staveley NR on 3rd November. In the Scarborough area, 200 were at Long Nab on 4th August and 100 were at Sawdon on 24th December. Feeders in Church Field, Spurn attracted 230 on 13th October.

Increases in the number of feeders and nest boxes are clearly having a beneficial effect; however, several areas suffered a poor breeding season, with inclement weather and predation having a negative affect at Filey Dams. At Old Moor, flooding of the nest boxes last summer was thought to have been responsible for lower numbers this year; high mortality rates were also reported around Kirklevington. However, despite this the population seems to be increasing in several areas. At Winterset, sixty-three pairs bred and a total of 347 nestlings were ringed, though some broods went unringed. At Flamborough, the population continues to increase, with High Level Stewardship options allied to a nest box programme having a positive influence. A total of 27 pairs bred at Blacktoft Sands.

Although sometimes thought of as a sedentary species, visible migration was noted at several sites including 142 south over Speeton on 11th October, with another 45 south the following day. Passage at Spurn totalled 3296 south from 16th August and 9th November; peak numbers moved in October, with maxima of 446 on 13th and 489 on 16th. Further evidence of how far movements can be, was illustrated by an individual ringed as a nestling at Kilnsea on 5th June 2008 later re-trapped by a ringer at Mildenhall Fen in Suffolk on 28th November; a direct distance of 141km.



Tree Sparrow •
Jonathan Pomroy

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs* A
Abundant and widespread resident, passage migrant and winter visitor
BBS 178/204: +45% (+16) 1994–2008, +17% (–5) 2007–08

The long-term trend has shown a substantial increase and this appears to have continued in 2008. It is the second most widespread species in the county BBS survey.

Numerous records of singing males reported from almost all parts of the county including 120 males singing in the north Leeds study area and more than 100 around Barnsley. Frequent counts of more than 50 males singing were reported elsewhere and 56 pairs bred at Fairburn Ings.

Feeders or specialist game crop cover were responsible for providing several of the higher counts with: 50 at Stainborough Lowe, Barnsley on 2nd February; 50 at the Keepers Cottage, Malham on 20th March; 50 on stubble at Worsbrough between late August and the end of October; 100 at High Batts NR during December. Other high counts included 84 which roosted near Redmires Res on 5th March and 150 at Eccup Res in January, 200 in February and 250 in December. Wortley Park hosted at least 200 on 23rd December.

There was an excellent spring passage at Spurn with the main movement from late March to early April, though some were still moving in June. A total of 3157 were recorded heading south between 27th February and 5th June with 255 on 29th March, 652 on 31st March, a very impressive 1655 on 1st April and 106 on 2nd April.

In autumn the movement was much lighter with 1875 heading southwards between 23rd September and 11th November, with a best of 462 on 22nd October. Elsewhere 43 flew west over Blackmoorfoot Res on 11th October, 85 headed south-east over Speeton on 12th October, while 50 were grounded at Marsden GC and 59 flew west on 24th October.

An adult male ringed near Antwerp, Belgium in November 2006 was re-trapped at Spurn on 28th October 2008 and an adult female ringed at Assen, Netherlands on 23rd October was found dead at Appleton Roebuck on 14th November. Another adult male ringed at Catterick Garrison on 31st December 2007 was killed in a collision with a vehicle on 28th March 2008 at Oldenburg, Germany.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla* A
Uncommon to fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor in variable numbers

Breeds from Scandinavia east to the Bering Sea; migrants mostly pass through the county to winter further south, but flocks attracted to beech mast will over-winter while supplies remain.

It was a rather disappointing year with a poor beech mast crop in the latter part of the year contributing to generally low numbers. Hatfield Moors attracted 50 on 19th January, with 30 still there on 29th March. At least 30 attended feeders in a Meltham garden between mid-February and mid-April and up to ten, including a leucistic individual, were at feeders in Otley in early February. Ten were in Wykeham Forest on 6th January and numbers peaked at 40 at Lockwood Beck in mid-January, with 40 also in Dalby Forest on 5th February. Thirty were present at Upleatham in late March. The latest spring migrant appeared at Flamborough on 29th May.

A single at Hunt Cliff on 6th September was the first of a poor autumn passage. Most appeared during the good spell in early November with Flamborough logging 29 on 3rd November and 25 at Filey the following day. There was also a good influx at Spurn with up to 58 grounded; in addition 43 headed south with 19 observed coming in off the sea. A party of 57 was on Eston Moor 10th November and 20 were in a game crop at High Hoyland from 19th December until the year end. Flasks Lake, Harrogate held 22 on 6th December.

A first calendar year individual, ringed in Norway on 29th September 2008 was re-trapped at Kilnsea just sixteen days later on 15th October, a direct distance of 662km from source.

SERIN *Serinus serinus* A 0,6,5,1,4
Amber list: rare passage migrant; 55 previous records
Breeds commonly through continental Europe to north-west Africa.

There were four records with all typically coming from Spurn. The first flew south past the Warren and was later heard over the Narrows on 11th May (AAH). The next also headed south two days later (AR) and the third flew south over Kew Villa on 27th May and was later noted heading over the Point (GED: NW). Finally, a male in Willow Cottage garden, Easington flew off south on 28th May (MGS).

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris* A
Common resident and passage migrant
BBS 122/204: +27% (+24) 1994–2008, –32% (–12) 2007–08

A mostly European species that is resident in the county, although there is some seasonal movement and immigration from Fennoscandia. This species appears to have suffered a reverse in fortunes in both 2007 and 2008.

At Higham, Barnsley 100 attended feeders on 31st January, while a roost at Yeadon Tarn held 250 in February. Another roost at Mosborough hosted 95 on 9th January and 118 on 8th February.

Breeding reports were widespread and included fourteen pairs at Spurn and eight pairs at Fairburn. Some of the breeders at Spurn raised both second and third broods.

Most of the higher counts were made in the latter part of the year, with 300 at Yeadon Tarn in December, but these numbers represented only about half those recorded in 2007. A total of 78 roosted at Mosborough on 16th December. Other notable counts included 80 at Thrybergh CP on 7th September, 110 at Speeton Manor Farm on 12th October, 200 feeding at Spurn in October, 60 at Flamborough on 18th/20th November and 80 at Eccup Res in December.

Spring passage along the coast was light and autumn movement was also rather quiet. At Spurn, 3526 moved south between 25th August and 11th November, with a maximum of 436 on 13th October.

A longevity record was established when a bird ringed as a first-year male at Berkhamsted in Hertfordshire on 8th February 1999 was found dead in a building at Bubwith, near Selby on 5th May 2008; 12 years and 15 days after it had been ringed. Another notable recovery was of a first-year female ringed at Maunby on 29th September 2007 which was re-trapped on Guernsey on 16th March 2008.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis* A
Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor
BBS 127/204: +69% (+31) 1994–2008, –14% (+20) 2007–08

Britain’s resident race *britannica* mostly winters overseas to the south in France and Spain, but some birds are present year-round in the county, with passage from further north in Britain. The long-term population trend is upwards, but a decrease was noted locally in BBS this year.

The breeding season appeared to be successful with reports including 19 singing males in the Cononley area; five pairs bred at Pugney’s CP and seven pairs bred at Spurn. Numerous juveniles were observed in the Bradford area with many of these being in private gardens.

Demonstrating the value of environmentally friendly farming, 300 were on set-aside at Cudworth Common on 1st January. However most large flocks were noted in the later part of the year with: 110 at Soil Hill, Bradford in August, 250 at both Hummersea on 16th September and Staveley NR on 29th, 135 at Flamborough on 24th October and 140 at Sconce in December.

Spring migration was noted at Hunt Cliff in late April with a maximum of 103 on 26th. At Spurn, 1326 passed southwards between 25th February and 7th June peaking in late April, with 128 on 25th. Autumn passage produced a total of 10,640 between 3rd September and 28th November, with a maximum of 1521 on 13th October. Elsewhere 129 headed south-east over Speeton on 11th October, with 162 similarly south-east there the next day.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus* A
Scarce breeding resident; uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS 9/204

Breeds in upland conifer plantations, but visitors to gardens in winter may include immigrants from northern Europe. There is insufficient local breeding data to identify trends, but nationally it has increased by 22% since 1994, and was recorded from more BBS squares this year.

Following a large influx in late 2007, good numbers were present at many sites. In January 200 were on Calley Heath on 2nd, with 100 at Askham Bog on 6th and a similar number at Yearsley on 12th (all York recording area), 100 were at Elland GP on 11th with 80 still there on 18th and 200 were at Lemonroyd on 16th. Carlton Marsh and Edderthorpe Flash also produced counts of 80 on 16th and 20th January respectively. Pit-house West hosted 200 on 2nd February, but by far the highest count came from Howden Res where more than 500 were recorded on 30th March. Subsequent counts included 100 at Barden View Point in April.

Singing males were observed at several locations, but additional breeding behaviour was observed in the Langsett and Upper Midhope areas; a family party was at Flouch on 19th June, with juveniles also noted at Wharnccliffe. Of 39 gardens in Upper Wharfedale, 21 attracted Siskins with four containing juveniles between 26th June and 21st July. Two gardens had nesting pairs, with six young fledging in total. Family parties were also seen at Eccup Res and in Alwoodley.

Flamborough recorded 147 on 28th June, 16 were at Hunmanby Gap on 2nd July with 70 at Potteric Carr on 17th July. In the later part of the year good numbers were still present at several sites including 100 at Redmires Res on 20th September.

At Spurn there was the best passage during the first half of the year on record, starting on 8th January and continuing until the end of July. A total of 1247 moved south with peaks of 147 on 30th March and 94 on 1st April. Feeders placed at Kew Villa attracted many and subsequently 173 were ringed. Prior to this year, a total of only 756 had ever been ringed.

Flamborough recorded passage almost daily between 6th September and 26th November, with a peak of 155 on 21st September. Visible migration began at Speeton in early September with 30 south-east on 2nd and 47 south the following day. The main movements occurred in two phases with 168 south-east on 20th September and 182 south-east on 21st September. However, there then followed a lull, until the latter half of October when: 46 flew south on 21st; 77 headed south on 22nd and finally 102 tracked south on 24th October. Autumn passage at Spurn was also above average and 1644 went south between 31st August and 7th December, with highs of 110 on 12th and 242 on 21st September and 113 on 7th November.

At Sharow Grange, Ripon a female ringed as a first-year bird on 11th February 2006 was re-trapped at the same site on 12th January 2008 and again on 26th December 2008.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina* A
Red list and UK BAP species: common resident and passage migrant
BBS 85/204: –26% (–34) 1994–2008, +33% (+19) 2007–08

A partial migrant, with some birds wintering in France and Spain. Numbers fell rapidly between the mid-1970s and mid-1980s, due to increased nest failure rates, and have fallen again since 2002. However, the last two years have seen a halt in the decline and this year’s BBS results are encouraging.

Larger gatherings in January included flocks of up to 150 at Star Carr, Scarborough on 4th, at Cudworth Common on 12th and in a stubble field at Southfield Res on 31st. More than 100 were still at High Hoyland on 13th February. A rape crop at Eccup Res held 300 in January and 150 were in maize stubble at Brearton, Harrogate throughout January and February. However, some sites are deserted in the winter months with locations such as Winterset and Filey only recording the odd bird before April. Numbers peaked at many locations in April with 250 at Flamborough on 22nd and 150 at Cayton Carrs on 28th. At Spurn, the highest counts involved 535 on 24th April with 793 the following day.

In the Barnsley area 13 pairs held territory at Winterset, with 15 pairs on Skipwith Common and ten pairs at Brierley Common. Near Rotherham 12–14 pairs bred at Ulley CP, while there were twenty singing males at Spurn.

The most notable records in the second half of the year were 500 at Flamborough on 20th August, 300 in rape stubble at Southfield Res on 29th August, up to 400 near Rotherham in September and 290 at Silver Wood, Rotherham in October. A flock of 200 were at Silverwood Colliery on 9th December.

In autumn, passage through Spurn included 500 on 20th August, while Spurn logged 642 on 21st September and 656 on 6th October. Elsewhere, 140 flew south at Long Nab in two hours on 9th September. At Speeton 131 flew south-east on 21st followed several days later by 176 south-east on 27th September.

TWITE *Carduelis flavirostris* A
Red list and UK BAP species: scarce resident breeder in Pennines; uncommon migrant/ winter visitor.
BBS 3/204

Birds of the British race *pipilans* breed colonially on moorlands in Scotland, Ireland and in the South Pennines SPA.

Numbers in the South Pennines have been declining for some time and this trend appears to have continued. Numbers were down for the second successive year in the Bradford area and it was difficult to locate on the moors near Huddersfield away from a favoured feeding site. However, a single was observed with nest material and six young successfully fledged from a single nest despite awful weather. Additionally, adults with two fledged young were noted at another site. Further north, numbers at Malham were only a fraction of their former levels, with three pairs noted on a single date. On 30th June, six were recorded on Pen-y-Ghent Fell, a former breeding area.

Unusually, two remained at Swillington Ings from New Year’s Day until 1st March and 15 were at Patrington Haven on 17th February. Between 40 and 45 were observed migrating northwards near Guisborough Forest on 9th March. Four associated with a flock of Linnets near North Duffield on 7th April and 20 were near Huddersfield on 23rd April. Twenty stayed on the coast between Marske and Redcar in November/December, while Flamborough’s best consisted of 23 in October. Forty remained above Huddersfield on 28th November and a party of 20 was at Patrington Haven on 21st December.



Linnet o
Ray Scally

LESSER REDPOLL *Carduelis cabaret* A
Red list and UK BAP species: scarce breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor. BBS 4/204
Breeds in northern and south-east Britain, wintering to the south. It is now largely absent from lowland areas in the county.

In January 30 remained in Fulford, eighteen were at Rodley NR on 17th and 16 visited Cononley Ings. In March there were 100 in Worsbrough and 80 at Pit House West near Sheffield, with 80 also recorded at Rother Valley CP on 17th April. Up to six attended feeders at Ben Rhydding, Burley-in-Wharfedale, Meltham and Harrogate between January and early April.

Evidence of breeding was rather limited with territorial males noted at four sites near Cononley and there was a displaying male at Winscar Res on 4th June. One male was singing at Scar House Res on 12th April and three males were displaying at Lockwood Beck. Three pairs were feeding young at Dunford on 4th July and juveniles were discovered near Litton, Upper Wharfedale during BTO Atlas surveying. Probable breeding was reported from a few additional locations, though never involving more than a maximum of three pairs.

Autumn passage, especially along the coast, was above average: 51 were logged at Flamborough on 20th September, 55 moved south over Ewden Height on 21st and 47 came in off the sea at Filey on 26th, while 35 flew south at Nosterfield NR the next day. In October 53 were recorded at Flamborough on 12th. Spurn recorded an excellent autumn passage from early September through until late November, with an exceptional 502 passing south on 21st September and 237 south on 28th September. Likewise good numbers were logged heading south-east over Speeton with bests of: 33 on 18th September; 160 the next day; 90 on 20th September; 123 on 21st September. Subsequently a second wave passed over Speeton with 88 on 11th October and 95 south-east on 12th October.

Elsewhere good-sized flocks were noted at several locations in the west with: 126 at Agden on 1st September, 100 on Hatfield Moors from 11th–17th October, 300 at Wharnccliffe Heath on 2nd November and 157 at Pit House West on 28th November. Finally, on 30th December there were 100 at Wintersett.

There were several interesting ringing returns with a bird ringed on 4th October at Spurn re-trapped on 8th November at Munsterbilzen in Belgium and another, ringed at Kilnsea on 21st September was re-trapped at Dornholzhausen, Germany on 24th November. Another full-grown bird ringed at Copeland Bird Observatory in Northern Ireland on 12th September was re-trapped at Tinsley Sewage Works, Sheffield on 28th October.

COMMON (MEALY) REDPOLL *Carduelis flammea* A
Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor

This species breeds further north than *cabaret*, across northern Europe, through Asia to North America. Subspecies also breed in south Greenland and Iceland. During eruption autumns, large numbers migrate through or winter in the county. However, the identification of this species is extremely difficult at times, especially in spring when confusion with Lesser Redpolls is a real issue.

A single remained from 2007 at Swillington Ings up to 23rd January and again at nearby Methley on 16th March. Up to four associated with Lesser Redpolls in Fulford in January and two were in Filey on 4th January. In February, four visited Otley Wetland on 4th, Hatfield Moors hosted a single on 9th and one was trapped and ringed in Haw Park, Wintersett the following day. A single was at Old Moor from 17th–20th and another appeared at feeders at CSL during February. A single remained in the vicinity of York University from 5th–26th March, three were in a garden in Guisborough on 16th March and two visited Rawcliffe Lake, York on 21st March. A single was discovered on 5th April in the Binn Green/Yeoman Hay area of Huddersfield. Spurn had a good spring with five records, starting with a male south over the Warren on 24th April. On 27th April one was at the Point and a minimum of five flew south. A male flew south at Spurn on 3rd May, alighting briefly at the Point. Inland there was a late record of two with Lesser Redpolls near Bolsterstone on 20th May. Finally two were at the Point at Spurn on 27th May, one of which remained until 30th when it was heard singing.

The first of the autumn was one trapped and ringed at Filey on 26th September. The first of the autumn at Spurn flew over the sea-watching hut and onto Clubley's Scrape on 8th October, and one was at Southfield Farm on 11th. One was seen in Church Field on 25th, followed by a single at the Point on 30th/31st October. A mini-influx took place in early November at Spurn, with daily sightings until 9th and bests of 13 on 5th and 19 in the Spurn area north to Easington on 7th November. Elsewhere a single appeared on the south side of Castle Hill, Scarborough on 4th November, with presumably the same again on 7th. Two visited a garden at Beamsley, Upper Wharfedale on 5th November when another was at Filey, with Flamborough recording a single the next day. Allerthorpe Common then hosted two on 7th November. Spurn's last was logged on 23rd November.

Singles were trapped at Thorpe Marsh on 31st November and again on 15th December while one associated with four Lesser Redpolls in Langdale Forest on 8th December. Potteric Carr then hosted a single on 16th December.

CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra* A
Scarce breeding resident, occasionally in numbers following irruption years. BBS 3/204
Resident in conifer woodland across the Palearctic and North America, nominate *curvirostra* includes further forms identifiable by bill size and call, one of which breeds in the county, and others may do so following irruptions. This was a good year nationally for this species, although the long-term trend is downwards.

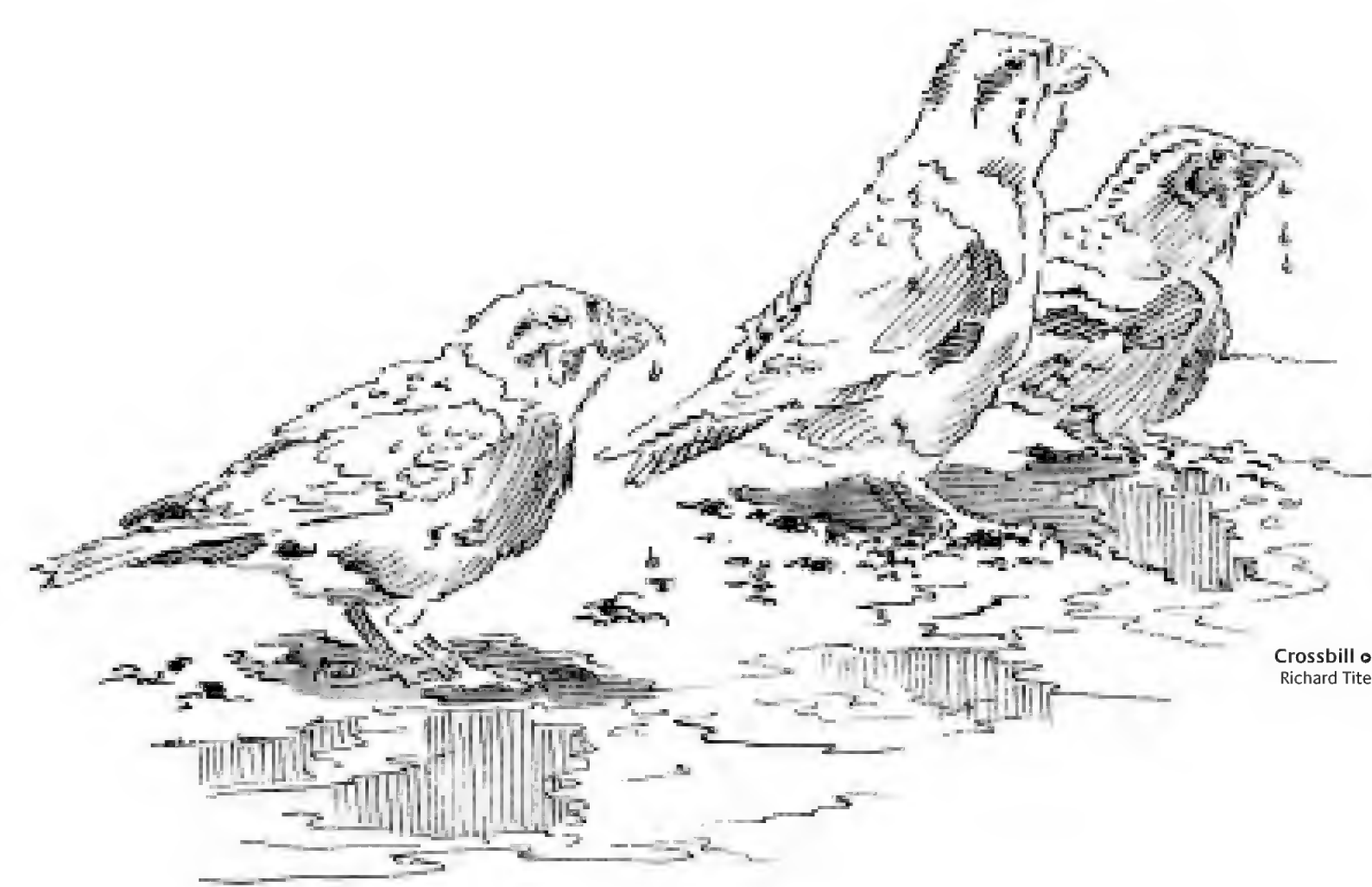
Langdale Forest hosted the only sizeable flock in the first winter period with 50 present on 23rd January. Two displaying males were noted as early as 5th January at Cononley, with up to 12 there in February which included two singing males. Other locations that recorded singing males included Hutton Village/Westworth Wood (several singing); a male at Winscar Res on 4th April; a single singing and displaying to a female at Scar House Res on 12th April; and one at Holling Dale Plantation, Sheffield on 12th May. On 15th July a female was observed giving a distraction display in Wykeham Forest. Breeding was confirmed at Scaling Dam with an adult carrying food on 28th March and two pairs were accompanied by very recently fledged young at Cononley on 30th May.

High counts in May included 60 in Harewood Dale Forest on 30th and 50 around Binn Green–Dovestones, Huddersfield from 12th–19th (with 30 still present on 8th August) and more unusually 23 were at Otley Wetland; there were also 52 in Langsett Wood on 5th June. Numbers were also augmented by a late spring/early summer influx as illustrated at Flamborough where there were peak counts of 19 on 21st and 21 on 30th June.

Subsequently, up to 50 were in the Barden area in June/July, a similar number roamed Allerthorpe Common in June and a flock of 65 roamed Wykeham Forest in July. Seventy-five at Guisborough on 13th July was considered an exceptional count for that location.

However, other areas experienced a disappointing year and the only record from the Leeds area related to two near Lindley Wood Res on 16th March. Six at Fairburn Ings on 16th July was the reserve's first record since 2004 and five visited Hornsea Mere on 18th July. Numbers were much lower from August onwards and generally in single figures, exceptions being 28 at Scar House Res on 13th August, 42 at Rombald's Moor in September and 50 on Allerthorpe Common during November. Eight at Cayton Bay and five east over Wheldrake Ings on 27th December were the last.

Visible migration was noted at several sites including Speeton where there were: two south-east on 10th October; six south-east the following day; four south on 12th October; and finally ten south-east on 24th October.



Crossbill
Richard Tite

TWO-BARRED CROSSBILL *Loxia leucoptera* **A** 0,0,0,0,2
Vagrant; eight previous records

Local resident within larch forests of northern Eurasia from north Russia to east Siberia. Irruptive dispersal leads to irregular breeding in Scandinavia. Outside breeding season, dispersal occasionally reaches north–west Europe. Nominate form breeds across North America.

Two males appeared well inland in late autumn and both were discovered while visiting garden feeders. The first was widely appreciated as it gave superb views at Garfitts Farm, Stokesley in Bilsdale between 27th October and 23rd November (PU *et al.*). The second male was photographed at Oakworth on 29th/30th October, but was unfortunately the victim of a Sparrowhawk (JeB).

These two records were part of an unprecedented arrival into the UK; those in Yorkshire were the furthest south, with most activity focused on Shetland, where 18 were present at Sumburgh alone.

COMMON ROSEFINCH *Carpodacus erythrinus* **A** 8,5,8,12,18
Scarce passage migrant; occasional rare breeder (first in 1992)

This species winters in southern Asia, but its breeding range across northern Eurasia has expanded westwards to reach Scandinavia this century.

The first was trapped at Kew Villa, Spurn on 24th May (PCo). Four arrived on 28th May: Filey hosted a single in the Country Park (FXM), a first–summer male was trapped at Flamborough (LB: PAL: JMP) and singles were at The Point (SE: DH) and Chalk Bank (DH) at Spurn. A singing male was then located at Filey Dams on 30th May (JHo *et al.*).

A single was trapped at the Warren (PCo: BRS), with another nearby at Southfield Farm, Spurn (SML) on 3rd June, with another by Spurn Lighthouse the next day (JAB). Three males were in song around Flamborough on 5th June with one remaining the next day (AMA: PAL). A single first seen at the Warren, Spurn on 7th was trapped at Kew Villa (PCo: BRS) and Flamborough recorded another singing male at South Landing on 8th (IM). The final record of spring related to a single singing at the Warren, Spurn on 29th June (MJP).

In autumn all three records came from Flamborough in September: a first–winter fed in gardens on the Outer Head on 17th (PAL), one was in the Bay Brambles on 20th (RAB) and a first–winter lingered in Old Fall Hedge on 24th September (PC: IM).

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* **A**
Amber list and UK BAP species: uncommon breeder; scarce passage migrant/ winter visitor. BBS 33/204

Birds of the British and Irish race *pileata* are non–migratory, and the marked decline since the 1970s must be attributable to changes in agricultural practices. Nominate race birds from Fennoscandia (“Northern Bullfinch”) can migrate long distances and are occasional east coast migrants.

There was a good spread of records with many reports of the species exploiting the availability of garden feeders stocked with sunflower seed. There were even reports of adults feeding juveniles from feeders in Ripon; 20 out of 39 gardens studies in Upper Wharfedale recorded the species.

Generally, most records referred to parties of up to six although 13 were in Worsbrough Valley and 11 at Hunmanby Gap on 9th February. Numbers increased further in the Worsbrough Valley, with 19 present in March and 31 present on 16th April which represented the highest ever tally for the Barnsley area.

During the summer there were five breeding territories at Wilthorpe Marsh and 13 around Winterset Res. Sixteen pairs bred in the north Leeds study area and six pairs at Fairburn Ings, while late broods in September included one of five at High Batts NR on 11th.

In the later half of the year there were 20 in the Old Moor area on 19th September and ten at Woodhouse Tip, Sheffield on 17th December.

Reports of individuals pertaining to the nominate race (*P.p. pyrrhula*) included a pair at Stile Scrub, Scarborough on 7th April and a female in the grounds of Poole Hospital on 2nd December.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* **A**
Red list and UK BAP species: rare breeding resident

This Palearctic species is scarce in the UK (3000 – 5000 pairs) and in long–term decline, and this also appears to be the case in the county, where it has disappeared from many traditional sites. Occasional migrants are seen on the coast.

The Rotherham area produced the first record with three at Roche Abbey from 10th–20th February, two there on 9th and 22nd March and a single on 29th March. Near York a single was photographed at the Stamford Bridge turnoff near Wilberfoss on 21st March; another single then visited a garden at Ravenfield Common from 5th–7th April. Coastal migrants started to appear in April with an adult male in the Crown & Anchor car

park at Spurn from 19th–22nd when it was trapped (ICW: SWH: RD *et al.*). Flamborough hosted a single along the track to Highcliffe Manor, South Landing on 28th/29th May (PC: JMP *et al.*). Spurn had additional records on 3rd June when a female briefly visited The Point (AA: SML) before being relocated further north on the peninsula the following day. Another visited Kew Villa, Spurn on 6th June (PCo) and more unusually a single flew over the Warren on 2nd July (JAB).

Two pairs probably bred and another three pairs possibly bred at an undisclosed site. The first autumn records appeared in September, with one briefly in the Crown & Anchor car park, Spurn on 14th (TMC) and another in Middle Hedge at Spurn three days later (AJG). A single flew south–east over Speeton on 20th September (KC), with another tracking south–east over Ripon Parks on 24th September. October’s sole records related to a singles at Grimston on 14th and Sherburn Willows on 17th October.

Several then appeared along the coast during the spell of north–easterlies at the start of November. One was in the Coastguard Cottage gardens, Flamborough on 1st November (RAB) and another was by Spurn Lighthouse on 2nd/3rd November and after being trapped was later released at The Warren where it remained until 6th (JMT *et al.*). In addition an unringed bird was at The Warren on 4th (RSm). A single in Filey CP on 5th November (TLH) was rediscovered in nearby Wooldale Drive the next day (SC *et al.*); it represented only the sixth Filey record. Finally one appeared in Flamborough village on 6th November (PAL).

DARK-EYED JUNCO *Junco hyemalis* **A** 0,0,0,0,1
Vagrant; one previous record

This species breeds throughout North America from northern Alaska south to southern California and northern Texas. Northern populations are migratory and winter south of the breeding range.

A first–summer male visited a garden at Newby in the Yorkshire Dales where it was photographed on 13th April (DPI). Unfortunately its visit was brief and it didn’t return; the only previous record near Rotherham in January 1977 was also enjoyed only by the finder.

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus* **A**
Amber list: scarce to uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor; rare inland

A regular winter visitor from the Arctic and northernmost Europe.

There were small numbers recorded on the coast in the first winter period with up to three intermittently at Cowbar from early January until 4th April, higher counts of ten on 8th January and 28th February and a peak of 12 on 9th January. Up to two remained at Filey until 4th April whilst a maximum of 15 wintered at Flamborough, reducing to two in March and a single from 5th–8th April. There were very few records elsewhere, with singles at Atwick on 18th March and Spurn on 7th February and 29th April.

The first of the autumn were four at Flamborough on 24th September, two at South Gare on 25th, a single at Speeton on 26th and two at Easington Lagoon on 27th September. October records included two at Speeton on 11th, singles at Cromer Point on 13th and Jackson’s Bay on 15th, with three at Cromer Point and in fields near Jackson’s Bay on 16th, a single at Speeton on 18th and records on eight dates at Flamborough during the month. November produced singles at South Gare on 1st and 3rd, Long Nab on 2nd, Hunt Cliff on 8th and on four dates at Flamborough. There was also a single at Flamborough on 18th December and ten on 25th with one still present the following day. The only records from Spurn in the latter half of the year related to singles on 12th, 14th, and 18th and two on 22nd October; one on 1st November and two on 9th. Filey recorded the highest numbers, with several records from 24th October to 31st December, including bests of 18 on 28th December and nine on 30th.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis* **A**
Amber list: uncommon winter visitor; scarce inland

Breeds in the circumpolar Arctic tundra, with small numbers in the Scottish Highlands: most of our wintering birds are probably from Iceland.

This species was very scarce in the first winter period with January records including 50 at Grimston (25 still present early March) 20 at Sunk Island and Saltwick Nab early in the month. February records included ten at Cayton Bay on 8th, eight at Trough Gully (Scarborough) on 9th, a single on Stanghow Moor, Cleveland on 11th February and five near Scalby Lodge Pond on 23rd. A few lingered into March with 11 at Sandsend from 12th–19th, four at Atwick on 18th, four at Easington Lagoons on 22nd, with three remaining until the 24th.

At the regular wintering sites the South Gare flock peaked at just 16 in February, with the last recorded on 24th March. Filey recorded good numbers at the start of the year with 70 present on 6th January and the last on 3rd April. At Flamborough 50 were present on 1st January with up to 25 during the rest of the month and up to 20 in February, but then only singles on three dates in March. This species was also scarce at Spurn with two on 5th/6th January, 23 at Chalk Bank on 19th, and a single on 26th January and three singles in March, the last being on 16th.

Inland there were three on Ingleborough summit on 2nd February, singles at Soil Hill on 8th February and over Southfield Res on 28th February. March records included a single on Staggs Fell near Hawes on 7th and two nearby on Dodd Fell on 8th.

The first of the autumn was a single at Burniston on 11th October followed by another at Scalby Lodge Pond on 15th, three at Cromer Point the following day, singles at Hummersea on 22nd, Scalby Lodge on 24th, two at Sunk Island on 24th, 11 in off the sea at Long Nab on 29th and six at Buckton on 30th October. November records included singles in the Scarborough area on 1st/2nd, two at Buckton on 7th, four at Holmpton on 9th, 30 at South Gare from 13th and 70 at Cowbar on 14th November when there were also 21 at Scalby Lodge Pond. Notable counts in December included 70 at Grimston on 2nd and up to 40 at Aldbrough from mid-month.

Records in the second winter period also came from Flamborough starting with singles on 18th October and 21st and seven on 29th October. In November there were 16 on 7th, 18 on 12th and 16 on 23rd November, but two on 7th and one on 25th were the only December records. There were records from Filey between 15th October and 24th December with bests of 25 at Reighton on 12th November and 60 on 2nd December. At Spurn singles were noted on a number of dates from 8th October including ten on 28th October; then almost daily records until the year end, with notable counts of 44 on 6th November, 56 on 10th, 62 on 17th November; 24 on 23rd and 30th December.

There were more inland records in the second winter period including singles at Thornton Moor on 3rd October and 18th October with four present on 1st November, when there was also one at Silverwood Pit Top. Soil Hill hosted one on 16th November with two at Soil Hill on 23rd November. Singles visited both Southfield Res and Swalesmoor, Halifax on 27th November.

The only inland record in December was a single over West Ayton Carr on 14th December.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella* A

Red list and UK BAP species: fairly common resident and passage migrant

BBS 103/204: -13% (-21) 1994-2008, -4% (-3) 2007-08

The population has fallen since the mid-1980s and the trend remains downwards, albeit at a slower rate, with the lack of winter seed availability thought to be an important contributory factor.

This species is still fairly common in the Scarborough area, with peak counts of 30 at West Ayton Carr on 4th January and 40 at two sites in late October. Neighbouring areas of the coast also attracted significant flocks, with 70 at Buckton Hall on 2nd February, 110 at Bewholme on 8th February and 65 at Flamborough on 25th December. There were records throughout the year at North Cave Wetlands with peaks of 50 throughout January, dropping to 20 during February and March.

Good numbers were also present at several sites within the York recording area including: 40 between Cliffe Common and South Duffield on 16th January; 20 at Fulford Golf Course on 16th January; 76 near Stittington on 8th February; 30 on farmland between Acaster Malbis and Copmanthorpe during February and 30 were counted at North Duffield Carrs on 27th March. In the latter half there were 20+ at Copmanthorpe on 2nd December, 30 in stubble near Terrington on 23rd and 50 at Bielby on 26th December.

Further west it was recorded throughout the year at Fairburn, where two pairs bred. Elsewhere the majority of records from Leeds came from the Wharfe Valley, with additional records from Temple Newsam Woods, Skelton Lake and at Fleet. However, it was struggling in the Barnsley area with highs of 20 at Old Moor during January and February, 20 at Carlton Marsh on 20th February and 25 at Worsbrough Valley on 23rd March. Territorial birds were recorded at a number of sites, with 17 territories located in the Winterset area and 16 singing males around Brierley Common.

The species retains a precarious hold near Bradford, with one or two at Baildon and singles seen at two other sites; there were no breeding records. It was the first year that there were no records from Upper Wharfedale, but substantial flocks were recorded at Staveley NR, in the Harrogate area with 100 in January, 200 during February and at least 60 until late April; despite these numbers, the only records during the breeding season there referred to just two singing males in July.

ORTOLAN BUNTING *Emberiza hortulana* A

1,1,1,1,3

Rare passage migrant, mainly in autumn

Breeds from Spain north-east through continental Europe to Scandinavia and east to western Siberia and Mongolia, and winters from Arabia west through sub-Saharan Africa.

A male was discovered at Sammy's Point from 28th to 30th May during the excellent fall conditions (JAB *et al.*), with a female also reported there the same day.

In autumn a first-year appeared briefly in Church Field, Kilnsea on 25th September (AR).

RUSTIC BUNTING *Emberiza rustica* A

0,2,0,1,2

Rare passage migrant, mainly in autumn; 58 previous records (60 birds)

There was a spring record at Spurn for the second consecutive year, with a first-summer male type near Canal Hedge on 8th June that later relocated to Walker Butts (ICW: SWh).

An immature/female was present at Hummersea on 3rd November (ECP) and represented the first away from Spurn since a first-winter male at Bempton in October 2005.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus* A

Amber list and UK BAP species: fairly common breeding resident and passage migrant.

BBS 50/204: +57% (+25) 1994-2008, +33% (-3) 2007-08

A Palearctic species which is largely resident in the county, joined by immigrants from Scandinavia in winter. The longer-term trend is slowly recovering after reaching a nadir in the late 90s, and BBS counts suggest a further increase in 2008.

It would appear that the population is still slowly increasing, particularly in the north of the county. In the west it remains a scarce but widespread species around Upper Wharfedale, where there were an increasing number of garden records and no change in status in the Bradford area. There were numerous single figure counts of singing males from many sites across the county, with more notable records of between 60-80 singing males between Skelton Lake and Lowther Lake, at least nine singing males also at Rodley NR near Leeds, 73 pairs bred at Fairburn Ings and 375 singing males were at Blacktoft Sands. In the Barnsley area there were 25 singing males at Winterset, 19 at Edderthorpe Flash, 12 at Wilthorpe Marsh and seven at Carlton Marsh. It is considered a widespread breeder around the Old Moor area, with up to 50 in May and 80 at Old Moor on 12th November.

Spring passage at Spurn totalled 32 heading south between 9th March and 1st May, including a high of 11 on 30th March. It was the best autumn passage for a decade at Spurn, with 462 south between 26th August and 23rd November, including highs of: 31 on 26th September, 29 on 25th, 40 on 28th September; 29 on 8th October, 42 on 9th, 45 on 13th and 25 on 22nd October. Ten appeared on South Gare during a fall on 6th September and Flamborough logged 16 on 6th October, 18 on 12th and 24th and nine on 30th October and 4th November.



Reed Bunting ◉
Ray Scally

BLACK-HEADED BUNTING *Emberiza melanocephala* **A**
Vagrant; four previous records

A migratory species that breeds in south-east Europe as close as southern Italy and across the western Caspian region; it winters in India.

A male was photographed in a rural garden at Fylingthorpe, Whitby on 28th May; it remained for twenty minutes from 1310hrs but then flew off and wasn't relocated (PLR: SJR). This record capped a fantastic period in the last few days of May, during which easterly winds and rain prompted the arrival of unprecedented numbers of Marsh Warblers and other scarce continental passerines, including good numbers of Red-breasted Flycatchers, Golden Orioles and Icterine Warblers. This represented the first record since the well-watched male at Flamborough in July 2000.

CORN BUNTING *Emberiza calandra* **A**
Red list and UK BAP species: uncommon breeding resident, not on higher ground. BBS 17/204

Breeds in open country from the Mediterranean to western China. After a massive decrease between the mid 1970s and 1980s, this species now seems to be restricted to discrete areas of the county containing optimum habitat, but previously under-watched areas being covered by the 2007-11 Atlas will reveal a more accurate picture.

Outside the breeding season notable counts included 30 at Wold Newton on 21st February, 40 at Buckton Hall on 22nd and 71 at Buckton on 24th February and peaks of 80 at Filey on 13th March and 48 at Haverdale in March. Up to 70 wintered at Flamborough, with 66 still present on 8th April. However, it would appear that the decline continues, with fewer records from the Scarborough area where the best flock was 13 at Willerby on 4th January.

Singing males were recorded at five sites on the Carrs south of Scarborough, including three males at Flixton on 22nd April. The Wolds to the west of Flamborough appear to represent one of the last strongholds in the county: a co-ordinated survey of these rolling chalk hills located in excess of 56 territorial males during late spring/early summer between Thwing, Hunmanby, Flamborough and Rudston. Further south there were two at Keyingham/Ottrington and five singing males at North Cave Wetlands. Only low numbers were recorded at Spurn, with no wintering flocks and just one pair bred north of Long Bank. Southfield Res experienced its poorest ever year, with just a single on 10th May.

Immediately west of the Wolds, another favoured area appears to be the lowlands south of York. Ten roosted at Melbourne on 6th January, with better numbers at Clifton Ings where 18 roosted on 16th February and 17 on 5th April. Sixteen again roosted at Clifton Ings on 28th October with 12 present on 28th November. However, an impressive 170 congregated at Wilberfoss on 9th February, about 30 were between Barmby Moor and Yapham on 17th November and 25 near Poppleton on 29th November.

This species is still declining in the Leeds area with the only singing birds noted at Lotherton Hall and Staxton, but a small breeding population remains to the east of Barnsley, with singing males at Brierley Common and Hoyle Mill Dam, Hemsworth. In the Harrogate area there were three or four singing males near Kirklington, with up to two pairs probably breeding in the Nosterfield area.

There were few large flocks reported in the second winter period although 55 were at Buckton on 31st December.

0,0,0,0,1

Category B

Species recorded in Britain in an apparently wild state prior to 31st December 1949, but not accepted by **BOURC** as having occurred naturally since then.

RUDDY SHELDUCK *Tadorna ferruginea* (N Africa, S Eurasia) **BDE***
Rare vagrant; feral/escapes confuse status

Some Yorkshire records of this species occur in the summer and autumn months on the Humber, especially the upper Humber area. Approximately 300 post-breeding moulting birds of presumably feral origin occur in the Netherlands at that time, and it is possible that some overshoot. Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* that leave Yorkshire to moult in the Waddenzee area of Germany may also "pick up" Ruddy Shelduck on their return later in autumn. Other birds escape from collections however.

In July, a bird was at Snaygill Ings on the afternoon of 25th and later the same evening what may have been the same was present at Hellifield Flash, where it was still present the following day. There were no further reports until August when a single appeared at Staveley NR on 11th, where it remained until the 23rd. This same bird was also thought to be responsible for the occasional sighting at nearby Farnham GP over this period; possibly the same individual was then present at Lingham Lake between 30th August and 2nd September.

Elsewhere six flew north past Spun on 5th September, three were at Hornsea Mere on 6th, eight flew west over Blacktoft Sands on 13th, with the same group of eight then seen flying east the following day. What was probably the same group of eight were then seen heading south-east over Swillington Ings on 15th. Also in September, singles were at Hornsea Mere on 19th, Watton NR on 24th, Wilfholme on 28th and at Lingham Water on 30th. In October singles visited Thrybergh CP on 9th, Lingham Lake on 10th and 22nd, two were at Blacktoft on 17th and the final record for the year was a single at Nosterfield NR on 24th December.

Category E

Species that have been recorded as introductions, transportees or escapees from captivity, and whose breeding populations, if any, are thought not to be self-sustaining. Category E species form no part of the British List. The range and status on the BOU category C or E list is given after the name, as some species fall into more than one category. These letters follow the publication of the BOURC's review of Category C (*Ibis* 147: 803-819).

WHITE-FACED WHISTLING DUCK *Dendrocygna viduata* (S America) **E**
Two were at Scaling Dam on 24th May and 23rd December.

BLACK SWAN *Cygnus atratus* (Australia) **E**

Pairs were present all year at Copgrove Lake (Ripon), Peasholm Park (Scarborough), Allerthorpe GP, where they were noted nest building in January, and nesting also took place at Fairburn Ings. Elsewhere lone birds were present for most of the year at Hornsea Mere and Castle Howard; between January and March a third individual joined the pair at Copgrove Lake.

In January, singles were at Holmebrook Valley Park (Sheffield) from 1st to 26th and at Potteric Carr on 6th, with two present on 24th. In April, there were three at Southfield Res on 7th, with a lone bird present here from 20th May to 18th August. Two were at Wykeham Lakes from 24th April-4th May, with a single present on 13th July. Singles were also occasionally reported from Silverwood Lagoon, Thrybergh CP and Parkgate, though there were three at Thrybergh CP in May.

During the second half of the year singles were at Hatfield Moors on 18th August, Beacon Ponds from 5th-7th September, Southfield Res on 11th, at Swillington Ings on 15th and 18th September and at Thrybergh CP on 26th. Lowther Lake hosted a single on 12th and 19th October. Singles were also present at Potteric Carr on 5th and 23rd October, 21st November and 14th December. One was at Beal Carrs on 12th and 30th November. A single was noted at several sites along the Aire Valley, including at Bingley and Snaygill Ings, from the end of February to mid-November at least.

SWAN GOOSE *Anser cygnoides* (E Asia) **E**

One was at Farnham GP on 12th January and again on 2nd October. Two remained at Scarborough Mere between 13th January and 9th March. Sandbeds in the Bradford recording area hosted a single with Greylags on 16th January. A lone individual visited Farnley Res on 16th May, 23rd October and 3rd November In addition, birds

were present all year at Golden Acre Park and a pair of the ‘Chinese variety’ remained at Scaling Dam until the end of the year; their third year in residence.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons* **AE**

A first-winter thought to be an escape from a nearby collection was at Scaling Dam from 11th March to 15th April and again from 7th to 21st June. This collection was probably responsible for a number of other escapee species appearing on Scaling Dam over the year.

LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser erythropus* (SE Europe & Asia) **AE**

A bird of dubious origin was at Thrybergh CP from 19th–21st September and what was probably the same bird was present at Rother Valley CP on 11th October.

BAR-HEADED GOOSE *Anser indicus* (S Asia) **E**

Lone birds were at North Cave on 14th and Kelk Lake on 27th January, with a single at Kelk Lake on 3rd February. Elsewhere singles visited Nosterfield NR on 18th February, Embsay Pond on 4th March, Welton Waters on 23rd March, Blacktoft Sands on 7th and 17th April and Rother Valley CP on 12th April. Two were on North Cliff Marsh, Flamborough with a Snow Goose on 20th May and three flew south past Spurn with a Snow Goose the following day. In June four were at Hornsea Mere on 22nd, when one was also at Scorton Quarry and four were at Swillington Ings on 28th. Three were at Swillington Ings on 20th July, with one here on 17th August. Long-staying singles were present at Blacktoft between 18th August and 15th September, Bolton–on–Swale GP on 17th August and 16th November and at North Cave between 10th October and 16th November. Singles were also noted at Beal Cars on 19th August and at Hornsea Mere on 16th November. During the year up to four were also regularly present at Carthick Wood, Eccup Res, Harewood Park, Lowther Lake and Roundhay Park.

SNOW GOOSE *Anser caerulescens* (N America & Siberia) **AC2E**

Up to two were present for most of the year at Harewood Park. A single visited Northcliffe Marsh, Flamborough with two Bar-headed Geese on 20th May and what was presumably the same bird flew south past Spurn the following day.

ROSS’S GOOSE *Anser rossii* (N America) **E**

An interesting series of sightings were reported during the year, starting with a single north-west with Pink-footed Geese over Staveley NR on 9th February; only the second record for the Harrogate area. There were no further reports until 6th September when a single flew south with 25 Greylag Geese; first seen over North Cave, the group later flew over Blacktoft Sands. What was presumably the same bird was also briefly present at North Cave for an hour on 9th September, before then turning up at Wheldrake Ings on 15th September where it remained until 14th October.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis* (E Greenland, Svalbard, Russia) **AC2E**

Some of these records may refer to genuine wild birds, rather than birds belonging to the feral population.

Monthly Maxima & WeBS counts												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Hay-a-Park	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	7	1	2	–
Hornsea Mere	66	66	66	61	–	–	–	–	67	84	67	–
North Humber	–	–	7	2	32	–	–	–	200	120	82	–
Scorton Quarry	–	–	7	11	5	2	17	1	–	1	–	–

In January, a single visited Pickering Park on 6th, two were at Tophill Low on 13th, and one was with Greylag Geese at Buttercrambe (York) on 17th and throughout the first three months of the year two regularly commuted between Filey and Primrose Valley. In February, there were lone birds with Greylags at both Castle Howard and at Long Preston on 10th, sixteen were at Harewood Park on 17th and two were at Long Preston on 9th March. In May, singles were at Lovell Hill on 1st and Semer Water on 18th. Singles visited Bran Sands, Fairburn Ings and Scaling Dam in June. Two were at Castle Howard on 19th July, while in August there were singles at Fairburn Ings on 4th and at Filey Dams on 18th. Elsewhere there were 17 at Bolton–on–Swale and 13 at Eccup Res on 29th and 30th August. A lone bird was present for most of the year at Gouthwaite Res.

During the autumn 200 birds were along the Humber on 14th September, one was at Swillington Ings on 27th and ten were at Eccup Res over 15th/16th September. In October there were 49 at Bewholme between 9th and 19th, ten were at Harewood Park and 18 were on Bolton–on–Swale GP. There were two at North Cave on 19th October, with three here on 16th November and a bird was at Knotford Nook on 12th December.

RED-BREASTED GOOSE *Anser ruficollis* (SE Europe & Asia) **AE**

A single at Gouthwaite Res from 12th January to 24th March before relocating to Lingham Lake where it was present from 25th March to 23rd April.

CAPE BARREN GOOSE *Cereopsis novaehollandiae* (Australia) **E**

One was on a pond near Markington on 4th/5th of July; what may have been the same bird was then present at both Nicholson’s Lagoon and at Ripon RC on 20th July.

GREATER MAGELLAN / UPLAND GOOSE *Chloephaga picta* (S. America and Falkland Islands) **E**

A female of the Falkland variety was at Lingham Lake on 2nd September and what was presumably the same bird appeared later in the month at Nosterfield NR.

CAPE / SOUTH AFRICAN SHELDUCK *Tadorna cana* (S Africa) **E**

A single was at Thrybergh CP from June to the end of the year.

MUSCOVY DUCK *Cairina moschata* (S America) **E**

Birds were present for most of the year at Swinsty Res, where there were usually two, although six were present on 9th March and up to five through April and May. Elsewhere a lone bird was also present at Yeadon Tarn for much of the year and was joined briefly by a second bird on 16th November. Shibden hosted a single on 1st January with perhaps the same at Ogden the following day. Two visited Hebden Bridge on 3rd February with two there again on 5th March. Singles were also present at Snaygill Ings on 8th June, Pheonix Park Res on 28th January, Scout Dike Res on 21st February and Ogden Res on 23rd March. Larger counts include six at Winscar Res on 7th March and five on Nafferton Mere on 1st January. A much more unusual record was of a single swimming in the surf off Saltburn on 1st March. The only report during the second half of the year was of a single on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Riddlesden on 30th November.

RINGED TEAL *Callonetta leucophrys* (S America) **E**

Dowley Gap hosted a single on 7th January and another was on Thwaite Pond in Cottingham on 2nd May.

WOOD DUCK *Aix sponsa* (N America) **E**

A drake was present at Scaling Dam from 14th April to 25th May.

GREY TEAL *Anas gracills* (New Guinea, Australia, New Zealand, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands) **E**

A single visited Scaling Dam on 22nd May.

AUSTRALASIAN SHOVELER *Anas rhynchotis* (Australia, New Zealand) **E**

A single of the New Zealand race (*A. rhynchotis variegata*) was at Wheldrake Ings.

CHESTNUT TEAL *Anas castanea* (S Australia) **E**

A male was feeding along the edge of the main lake at Swillington Ings on 1st January, a pair visted Caldene Fields on 4th December and a male remained at Yeadon Tarn from 19th–26th December.

BAIKAL TEAL *Anas formosa* (E Siberia & C Asia) **DE**

A drake and two females were at Scaling Dam on 21st May; the drake and one of the ducks were colour-ringed.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK *Aythya nyroca* (N America and Asia) **AE**

A female/immature sporting a colour ring was at Brown Baileys, Rotherham from 11th February–7th May and made occasional visits to Langold Lake.

HOODED MERGANSER *Lophodytes cucullatus* (N America) **DE**

A drake and a readhead were at Ardsley Res on 29th February.

HARRIS HAWK *Parabuteo unicinctus* **E**
One was in Temple Newsam Woods on 24th March and was seen quite regularly at Swillington Ings from 23rd August to early October. An escaped falconer’s bird with bells and jesses was between Capon Hall and Malham Tarn Estate from at least 15th April to 3rd October and a bedraggled bird with jesses visited Edderthorpe Flash on April 28th. The bird in the Sharow area that first appeared in 2005 was present throughout the year; during the early part of the year it associated with a pair of Buzzards *Buteo buteo* and was later seen provisioning the nest of the buzzard pair, suggesting that it may have been the male parent of the young (SP & JCW). A single with jesses and bell sounding suitably festive, was present in the Rivelin Valley on 25th–26th December.

RUPPELL’S VULTURE *Gyps ruppellii* **E**
First seen at Sleddale on 8th March, a single settled at Skelton Castle the following day, where it remained until 21st.

SAKER *Falco cherrug* **E**
One with jesses was at Bridlington on 24th February with another at Potteric Carr on 19th December.
A potential Saker hybrid wearing a DEFRA ring at Filey on 2nd August remained in the general area until at least 19th October.

GYR *Falco rusticolus* **E**
A white morph sat on fencepost by the A19 on 27th January (*per* Birdguides). A bird at Spurn on 6th March sported two plastic rings and was possibly a Gyr/Peregrine/Saker cross (AR: NP: SE). An escaped dark-phase (Canadian/Newfoundland) Gyr Falcon at Spurn on 16th and 19th July was wearing radio-tracking equipment (MG) and one appeared near Kelk on 8th January, 20th February and 18th December.

CHUKAR *Alectoris chukar* **E**
At least two were with Red-legged Partridges near Old Fall Plantation, Flamborough on 27th May.

GOLDEN PHEASANT *Chrysolophus pictus* **E**
A single was noted at Storiths, Bolton Abbey on 4th May.

COMMON PEA FOWL *Pavo cristatus* **E**
Typically elusive and skulking, a single was at Moorgate, Rotherham on 7th July.

EAGLE OWL *Bubo bubo* **E**
A walker was knocked to the ground by a single on Burnsall Fell, Bolton Abbey on 25th June, with a single adult in the same area on 12th July.
One at Steeton, West Yorkshire on 23rd October had reportedly escaped locally.

COCKATIEL *Nymphicus hollandicus* **E**
One was in a Gledhow garden on 31st August and an immature male was at Sherburn Willows, Leeds on 17th October.

ALEXANDRINE PARAKEET *Psittacula eupatria* **E**
One remained in the Saltaire area during February and March.

ORANGE-WINGED PARROT *Amazonia amazonica* **E**
A pair took up residence at Cottingham from 23rd January through to the year end.

COMMON WAXBILL *Estrilda astrild* **E**
A single visited a Guisborough garden on 15th October.

CANARY *Serinus canaria* **E**
One appeared in a garden at Skelton on 5th June.

YELLOW-FRONTED CANARY/GREEN-SINGING FINCH *Serinus mozambicus* **E**
A single remained at Filey Dams all year.

Additions and corrections to previous reports

Addition to 1995 Report

ARCTIC REDPOLL *Carduelis hornemanni*
One trapped, ringed and hotographed, at Paxton Pond, Dalby Forest on 16th December (SCE).

Additions to 2007 Report

SLAVONIAN GREBE
A single sheltered in Jackson’s Bay, Scarborough on 14th October (DJW).

OYSTERCATCHER
Five pairs bred at Nosterfield NR and Bellflask Quarry.

AVOCET
A pair at Nosterfield NR was prospecting for a nest site from 2nd–19th April.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER
Four pairs at Gouthwaite Res failed to breed successfully. A total of 14 pairs laid eggs at Nosterfield Quarry; six pairs hatched 20 young of which 12 fledged. Three pairs at Bellfask Quarry only managed to fledge one young and a pair bred at Marfield Quarry. Four pairs bred on the river Ure at Ripon Parks, but all failed due to predation and flooding and a single pair at Farnham had their nest predated by Moorhen.
The latest in the Harrogate area was recorded at Nosterfield NR on 24th September.

RINGED PLOVER
There were seven breeding attempts at Nosterfield NR (although none fledged) and six breeding attempts at Nosterfield Quarry, with a pair fledging four young. Passage at Nosterfield peaked at 85 on 14th May.

GREY PLOVER
Nosterfield NR/Nosterfield Quarry recorded singles on 6th January, 25th May and on 15 dates from 9th August–24th November, with two present on 29th September. Singles were also recorded at Nicholson’s Lagoons, Staveley NR and over Ripon in September and October.

LAPWING
A total of 76 pairs nested at Nosterfield NR, although many early broods failed; 33 pairs re-laid by 20th May and 40% of young fledged. Thirteen pairs also nested in set-aside around Sharow.

KNOT
Singles were at Nosterfield NR on 14th May and Staveley NR on 8th June. Three were at Nosterfield Quarry on 21st July, with singles on 18th and 25th–27th August and 13th September.

SANDERLING
Two were at Nosterfield NR on 14th May, singles were present on 13th, 20th and 29th May, with six on 18th/19th May. Nosterfield Quarry attracted single on 11th May with two on 19th and 20th and five on 23rd May. A single remained at Nosterfield NR from 25th–27th August and a single visited on 13th September.

LITTLE STINT
Two singles at Nosterfield NR on 13th May. Nosterfield NR then hosted three on 22nd and five on 23rd September, with a single on 28th–30th. Nosterfield Quarry had two on 29th with four present the following day. In October up to three were at Nosterfield NR from 3rd–11th and up to two were at Nosterfield Quarry from 3rd–13th.

CURLEW SANDPIPER
Nosterfield NR hosted the species on most dates from 15th September to 14th October, with a peak of 15 present on 23rd September.

DUNLIN

Autumn passage at Nosterfield was light with a maximum of 37 on 19th August.

RUFF

It was noted sporadically at Staveley NR during late August/September, with a best of ten on 15th September. Nosterfield's best related to 12 also on 15th September and a single was present until 9th December.

JACK SNIPE

A single at Nosterfield NR was unusually early to return on 18th August.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT

A single at Nosterfield NR on 17th February, up to four from 8th–14th May, a single on 28th July, up to two from 9th–29th September and a single finally on 30th December.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT

Singles at Gouthwaite Res on 29th April and 5th May.

CURLEW

Nosterfield NR hosted a maximum of 321 on 30th January and 250 roosted at Bellflask Quarry and 150 were around Ripon Racecourse over the same period. At the year end 415 roosted at Bellflask Quarry on 1st December.

COMMON SANDPIPER

Fifteen were present at Gouthwaite Res on 2nd June.

SPOTTED REDSHANK

Two were at Nosterfield NR on 26th August, with singles there from 21st–30th September and 3rd October.

GREENSHANK

One overwintered at Nicholson's Lagoon/Race Course Quarry until 9th March. Seven dropped in at Nosterfield Quarry on 25th August.

WOOD SANDPIPER

Singles visited Nosterfield NR on eight dates from 28th April–9th June, with one at Staveley NR on 29th/30th May. Singles then visited the Nosterfield area on 7th July and 19th August.

REDSHANK

Fifteen pairs bred at Nosterfield NR.

TURNSTONE

Singles visited Nosterfield NR on 1st, 7th, 11th–15th, 17th and 26th May, with four on 18th May. Autumn produced a single on 25th August. Farnham Quarry recorded singles on 17/18th May and 19th August.

Correction to 2007 Report

DUNLIN

Reference to 30,000 at Paull Holme Strays on 1st February was an error.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER

The second individual at Nosterfield NR was present from 19th–21st October (not solely 20th October). The single at Lingham Lake was also present on 30th October (not just 27th–29th).



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The Flamborough Head and RSPB Bempton Cliffs SPA Seabird Colony Census 2008

SUMMARY

A census of the RSPB Bempton Cliffs and Flamborough Head SPA was carried out in June 2008, using predominantly sea-based counts. Comparisons with similar censuses carried out as part of Seabird 2000, the Seabird Colony Register 1987 and Operation Seafarer 1969 revealed significant changes in the internationally important breeding seabird assemblage.

RSPB Bempton Cliffs and the adjacent Speeton Cliffs are the home to England's only Gannet colony. The number of breeding (Northern) Gannet has increased from only 20 pairs in 1969 to over 6,954 apparently occupied nest sites (AOS) in 2008, when a further 2,500+ immatures were present at the colony in June. This equates to c. 3% of the UK population (203,120 pairs) if compared with the Seabird 2000 census results. The continued growth in the Gannet population mirrors increases elsewhere in North West Europe. Gannet breeding productivity data collected at RSPB Bempton Cliffs over a 30 year period shows remarkable consistency during this time, with mean productivity of 0.80 fledglings per pair.

(Common) Guillemot, numbers increased by over 370% in the last forty years. A minimum of 59,817 individuals were present on the cliffs during the 2008 census. This increase is in contrast to the downward trend in many Scottish colonies, particularly in the Northern Isles of Scotland. In the Seabird 2000 census the number of individuals counted in UK colonies was 1,416,334 thus the SPA population now equates to c.4% of the UK population.

Similarly, the population of Razorbill has grown from 1700 birds in 1969 to 14,956 in 2008. The SPA now supports c. 8 % of the UK population (190,414) and c. 3% of the European population.

RSPB Bempton Cliffs and Flamborough Head continues to support the largest (Black-legged) Kittiwake colony in the UK. Despite a 13% decline since the year 2000, 37,617 pairs continue to nest on the cliffs. The SPA supports 10% of the UK breeding population when compared with the results of the Seabird 2000 census (378,847 pairs). Kittiwake breeding productivity in 2008 was relatively high, with each pair raising an average of 0.83 young per pair.

In common with (Northern) Fulmar populations across much of the UK, the number of breeding

birds has declined by a third since 2000 to 878 AOSs.

Similarly, the Herring Gull population has halved since 1968, with a 25% decline since 2000 to 533 AONs. A trend which is again reflected across much of the United Kingdom and may also be linked to changes in fishing practices. There is a need to better understand how this decline relates to growth in the urban gull population.

A similar trend was noted in the number of individual European Shag counted which has declined from 32 pairs in 2000 to 24 in 2008.

The number of individual (Atlantic) Puffin appears to have declined by 64%. Whilst this is only an approximation of what is actually happening (as Puffins are notoriously difficult to count due to their hole-nesting habits), the pattern does mirror similar declines on the Isle of May and the Farne Islands.

Three pairs of nesting Peregrine and a summering population of c. 500 non-breeding Great Black-backed Gulls were also recorded during the census; the latter feeding on the fledging auks and scavenged on corpses of seabirds and discards from fishing boats.

The census provides an index of what is happening in the population but shortcomings in the census technique and the lack of any productivity data for many species highlighted the need for more systematic monitoring of the SPA, one of Britain's most important seabird colonies.

INTRODUCTION

The Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA supports the largest seabird colony in England and holds the only Gannet breeding colony.

The colony extends over 16km of chalk cliff from Speeton Cliffs in the north, to South Landing in the south and incorporates the RSPB Bempton Cliffs and the YWT Flamborough Cliffs Nature Reserve and Flamborough Head, managed by East Riding of Yorkshire Council. Large sections of the cliffs are in private ownership. At the southern end, the relatively low cliffs, capped by boulder clay, are punctuated by a series of bays, arches, pinnacles and gullies which wrap around the headland. From Thornwick Bay northwards they rise gradually in an almost sheer



Gannets (Bempton Cliffs) ▶ Steve Race

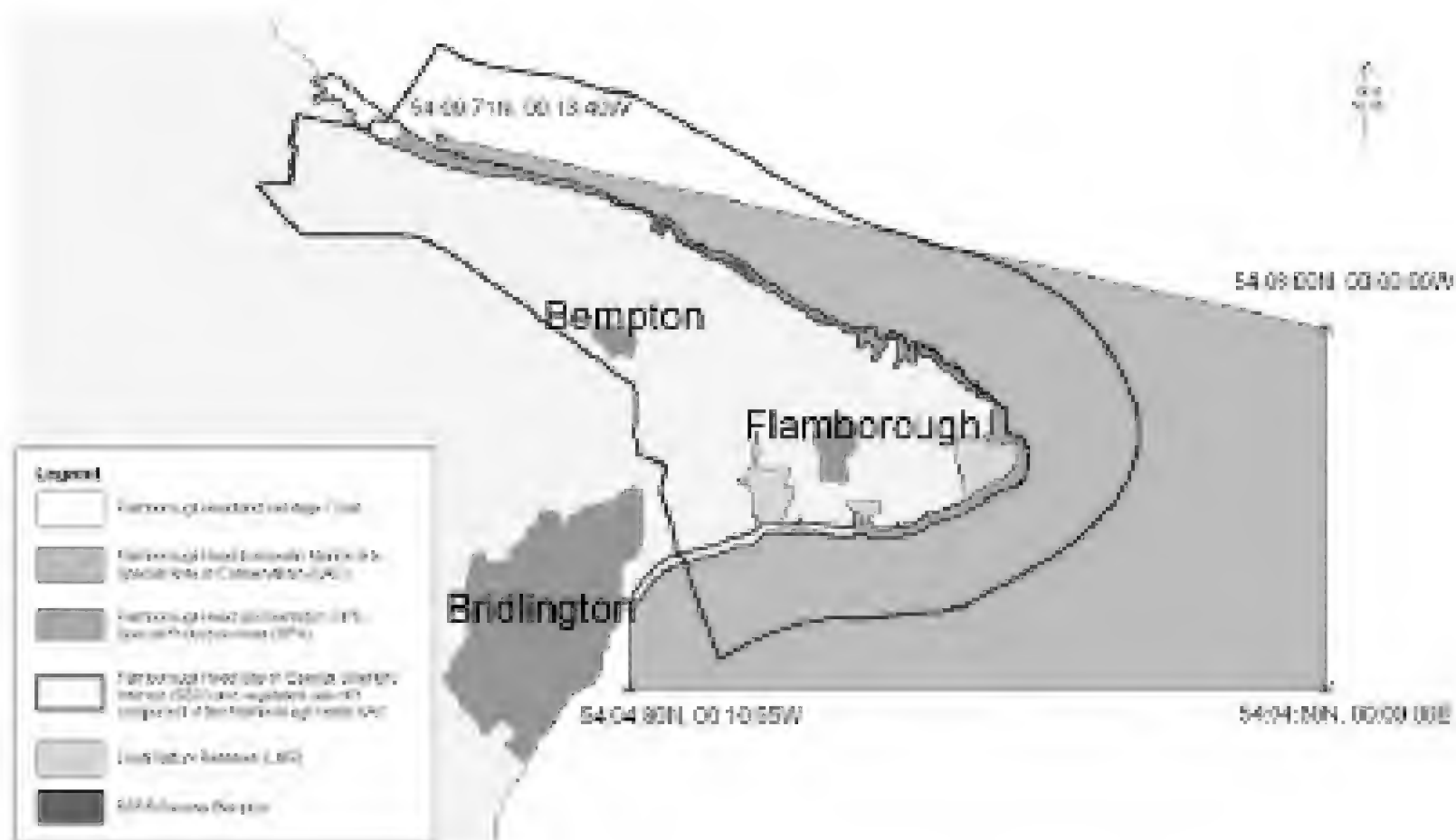


Figure 1: Map of the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA and its associated designations and boundaries.

cliff face to nearly 350 feet at the highest point north of Bempton Cliffs.

In 1986 the then Nature Conservancy Council designated the entire coastal strip as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and in 1979 the colony was further designated as a Special Protection Area, when the area was also designated as a 'Heritage Coast' (Fig 1).

The 1992 citation for the SPA is a response to the colony regularly supporting an internationally important breeding population of Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*, 83,700 pairs counted in 1987 (2.8% of the western European population and 17% of the British population). It also supports nationally important populations of Guillemot *Uria aalge* (32,000 individual Guillemot (>3% UK population) 7,700 Razorbill *Alca torda* (>5% of the British population) and 7,000 Puffin *Fratercula arctica* (1% of the British population).

Prior to 2008 there have only been three complete censuses of the Bempton Cliffs and Flamborough Head Colony - Seabird 2000, the Seabird Colony Register (SCR) in 1987 and Operation Seafarer in 1969.

The purpose of this paper is to present the results of the fourth census, which was carried out in 2008, and to provide a summary of the known productivity data from the RSPB Bempton Cliffs Annual Reports.

The 2008 Census was carried out by the RSPB as part of a partnership with Natural England which aims to develop a seabird research and monitoring programme for RSPB Bempton Cliffs and the wider Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA.

The data will be used to inform SSSI and SPA condition assessments and activities likely to adversely affect the SPA and SSSI features and will also be used to inform the Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) co-ordinated by Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC).

METHODOLOGY

The 2008 Seabird census was based on the guidance provided by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) for the Seabird 2000 census (Mitchell *et al.*, 2004). The boundary of the colony was defined by the JNCC's Seabird Monitoring Programme.

A complete photographic record of the colony was obtained at the start of the season. The 13 subsections, allocated in Seabird 2000, were transposed onto the photographs and sub-divided into 178 plots to enable the count to be undertaken in bite-sized chunks. The plots also allowed a more detailed comparison between different sections of the colony. The photographs were then laminated and used in the field to enable a reasonably accurate assessment of the boundary of each plot at the time of the counts. These photographs are now stored centrally at RSPB HQ and in the RSPB Bempton Cliffs office.

The majority of plots (90%) were counted from the sea (method 1.1, Seabird 2000). Where viewing from the sea was restricted, plots were counted from land as (method 1.2, Seabird 2000). Each plot was counted on a single occasion.

Boat hire was courtesy of the Emmerson family, based at North Landing. The boats were usually only available for hire in the afternoon. The cost of hire was £60 per hour. Both Mike and Richard Emmerson were very helpful and skilful and have piloted the boats for both the Seabird 2000 and the 2008 Census. The presence of offshore reefs restricts access to some sections of the colony to only high tide. Counting the very high cliffs requires the observer to be further away from the cliff. Afternoon counts in bright sunlight can be difficult due to glare from the sun, however, the cliffs are often in shade and therefore the birds are easier to see.

Counting was restricted to days when the visibility was good and the sea state was either flat calm or small waves, with the wind typically from the south west/west and up to strength 2/3. The count, which was severely constrained by weather and sea conditions, was completed over a 24 day period from 2nd-26th June. The whole colony Gannet count was undertaken separately on 30 June.

There were always at least two observers, Keith Clarkson and Wesley Davies, with help from Craig Thomas, Ian Kendall, and Clare Clarkson. A familiarisation visit was undertaken prior to the colony count involving several hours of training. During this familiarisation each observer counted the same plot independently; counts were then compared and recounted until an acceptable error margin was achieved. Plots were divided into smaller sections and counted to produce a cumulative total for each plot. A total of fifty hours counting, including 40hrs sea-based, was undertaken to complete the census (Table 1).

The following common monitoring standards (Walsh *et al*, 1995) were used:

Fulmar

Apparently occupied sites (AOS) using the whole colony census method.

Gannet

AOS using census method 1. In previous years Apparently Occupied Nests (AON) have been recorded, but it was almost impossible to determine whether all birds have nests or not when counting from the sea at the base of 300 foot cliffs. A separate sea-based count of the Gannet colony was undertaken on 30th June, using Method 1. All groups of non-breeding birds were discounted from the main count.

Shag

The recommended unit is AONs. However, most pairs appear to be nesting in caves therefore it is not possible to count AONs. The unit used is the number of individuals in breeding plumage.

Herring Gull

Method - 1 AONs. Some failed breeders may have been missed in late June.

Kittiwake

Census method using AONs.

Guillemot

Whole colony census method, counting all individuals on potential breeding sites, club birds at the base of the cliffs were excluded.

Razorbill

Surprisingly easy to count in this colony using the whole colony census method and counting all individuals.

Puffin

Method 3, sea-based counts of all individuals, likely to be problematic later in June when more non-breeders typically arrive at the colony. Counts made in May to avoid counting non-breeders coincided with days when too few birds were present at the colony.

Health and Safety

The RSPB Health and Safety guidelines for working in coastal areas informed a risk assessment which was produced for undertaking the census. Land based counts were restricted to designated areas with fencing between the observer and the cliff edge or, alternatively, at specific agreed locations where the observer is >2m from the upper slope, on a flat area of land. All other counts were sea-borne from boats. This removed or significantly reduced the risk associated with counting from the cliff top.



Kittiwake © Marcus Conway

JNC Seabird Colony Register Plot Name	Fulmar (AON)		Shag (AOS)		Gannet (AOS)		Kittiwake (AON)		Herring Gull (AON)		Guillemot (Individuals)		Razorbill (individuals)		Puffin (individuals)	
YEAR	2000	2008	2000	2008	2000	2008 30 June	2000	2008	2000	2008	2000	2008	2000	2008	2000	2008
HEAD	158	87	9	2			4198	4913	50	49	6036	8348	1025	2276	225	51
BREIL	55	24	10	8			3267	3035	24	12	2617	3467	254	619	33	19
SCAR	174	111	7	9			8023	6092	130	105	2678	4254	895	2198	227	181
THOR	39	29	0	0			397	648	13	4	68	238	83	391	12	7
NORTH	148	119	0	0			1822	1387	64	57	2426	4865	572	1274	167	44
DYKE	106	51	0	0			2450	1644	74	84	3400	6565	415	1445	112	110
WAND	124	89	2	3	nc	586	5920	4806	126	119	7200	8235	1051	1514	440	161
GRAND	106	59	0	0	nc	381	3807	3611	46	24	5960	7265	1435	1353	444	107
BART	76	71	2	2	nc	1768	6290	6536	31	7	8160	8815	830	1410	232	101
JUBI	72	36	2	0	nc	1417	2310	2229	29	12	2920	2430	732	895	215	52
BUCK	58	53	0	0	nc	1532	1480	1246	19	10	2960	3479	540	549	254	98
TRIG	57	51	0	0	nc	1270	1760	1137	21	24	2200	1751	606	846	251	27
SPEE	121	89	0	0	nc	0	853	333	80	34	60	105	101	186	3	0
TOTAL	1294	869	32	24		6954	42577	37617	707	541	46685	59817	8539	14956	2615	958

nc = no count

Table One: Intra- colony variation in the breeding seabird population of the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA between the years 2000 and 2008.

RESULTS

The results of the 2008 colony count highlight significant changes in the breeding seabird assemblage in the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA (Table Two).

Assuming a conversion factor of 1 bird : 0.67 pairs for breeding Alcids (Harris 1989), the 2008 Census suggests a seabird breeding assemblage of c.97,000 pairs nesting in the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA. It seems reasonable to assume that over a quarter of a million birds will be present at the colony during the breeding season.

FULMAR Fulmarus glacialis

2008 breeding population - breeding Fulmar are distributed throughout the colony with the largest concentration of birds recorded at the northern end of the colony, on Speeton Cliffs. A difficult bird to locate from the sea as they often nest in small caves and hollows in the cliff – the longer you look the more you find seemed to be a rule. In 2008 a total of 869 AOSs were located.

Population trend - a 32% decline was recorded between the 2008 and the Seabird 2000 count when 1280 AOSs were located. This decline follows an increasing population trend from 1969-2000 (fig 2).

Trend in Northern Fulmar Fulmarus glacialis breeding population on Flamborough/RSPB Bempton Cliffs SPA

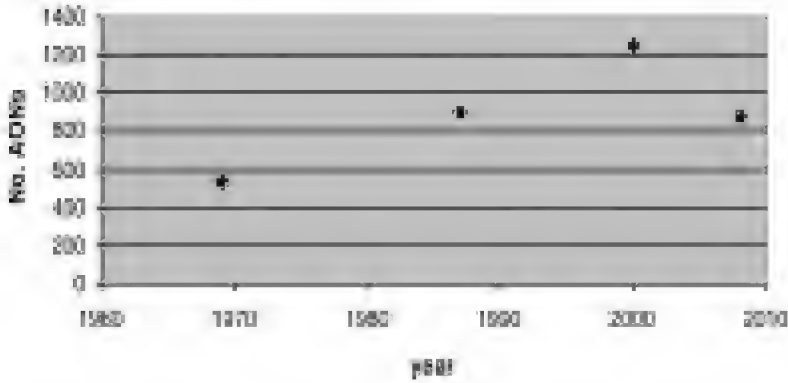


Figure 2: Variation in the numbers of apparently occupied nests (AONs) of the Northern Fulmar Fulmarus glacialis in the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA.

GANNET Morus bassanus

2008 breeding population – the Gannet colony continues to increase and extend its breeding area within the SPA, building outwards from existing locations. The southern limit of the colony is just north of Dykes End stretching northwards for c. 5 km to Speeton Cliffs.

In 2008 two counts were carried out - the annual whole colony census on 30th June, and a series of counts of the different sections of the colony between 17th and 25th June. The whole colony count produced a count of 10,266 individuals which included 2,352 non-breeders, many of which appeared

to be establishing nest territories within the colony rather than being restricted to ‘club’ areas. Furthermore, many birds within what were previously ‘club’ areas are now breeding successfully. The number of breeding sites again increased with 6954 Apparently Occupied Sites being counted. The cumulative total of the counts of different sections of the colony produced a total of 6386 AOS.

Population trend – No count of the colony was made in Seabird 2000. However, whole colony counts have been made on an almost annual basis since 1969. These results show an almost exponential growth in the colony (fig 3).

Trend in Northern Gannet Morus bassanus breeding population on Flamborough/RSPB Bempton Cliffs SPA

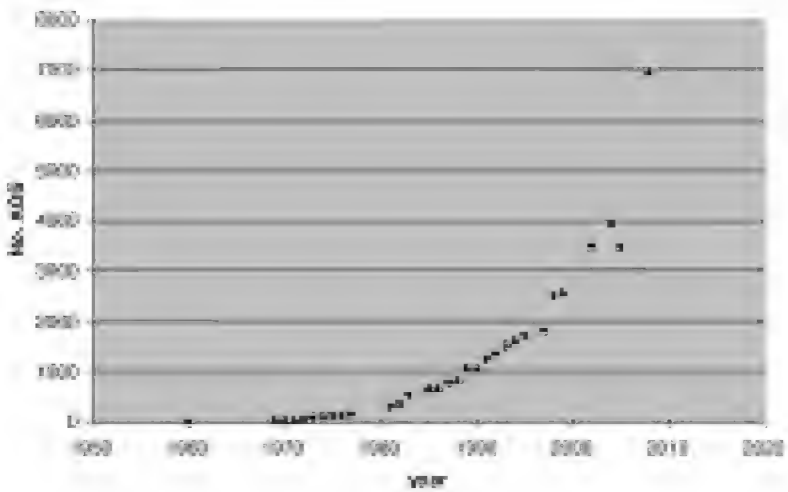


Figure 3: Annual variation in the breeding population of Gannet Morus bassanus in the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA.

Productivity - in 2008 Gannet productivity was 0.82 fledglings per nesting pair. The trend productivity monitoring has been carried out at Staple Newk, RSPB Bempton Cliffs since the early 1970s. The results are remarkable in their consistency with a mean productivity of 0.78 fledglings per nesting pair (fig 4).

Annual variation in breeding productivity of Northern Gannet Morus bassanus at RSPB Bempton Cliffs

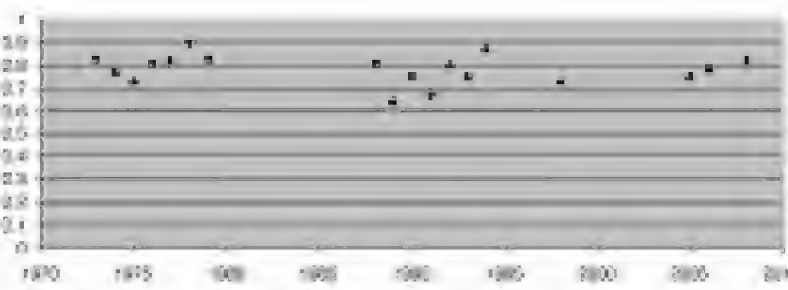


Figure 4: Annual variation in the breeding productivity (fledglings per nesting pair) of Gannet Morus bassanus in the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA.

SHAG Phalacrocorax aristotelis

2008 breeding population – only 24 Shag in breeding plumage were counted. The majority of the birds were associated with the extensive cave system around Flamborough Head.

Population trend – a 25% decline in the breeding population of Shag has occurred since Seabird 2000 when 32 AONs were counted. This appears to be part of an ongoing decrease with a 60% decline since the Seabird Colony Register count of 60 pairs in 1987 (fig 5).

Trend in European Shag Phalacrocorax aristotelis breeding population on Flamborough Head and RSPB Bempton Cliffs SPA

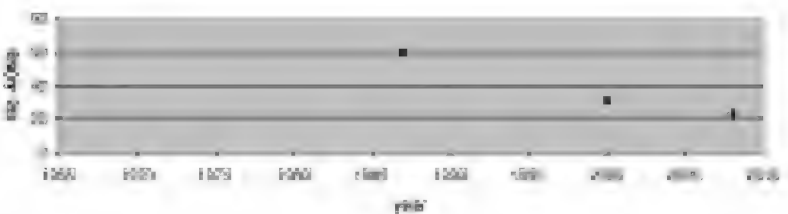


Figure 5: Variation in the annual breeding population of Shag Phalacrocorax aristotelis in the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA.

Productivity – no productivity monitoring was carried out.

KITTIWAKE Rissa tridactyla

2008 breeding population – a small colony extension of 365 pairs was counted between Flamborough Head and South Landing. It is not known how long these birds have been established at the southern end of the colony but they were not counted in the Seabird 2000 census. Elsewhere, 37,617 AONs were counted across the colony with the main concentrations around RSPB Bempton Cliffs and Breill Nook (YWT). The colony now supports c.10% of the UK and Ireland population.

Population trend – the number of nesting pairs (AON) fell by 11% from 42,380 during Seabird 2000 to 37,617 AONs in 2008 (fig 6). There is still considerable controversy surrounding the 1987 Seabird Colony Register count carried out by Peter Philp which suggested a breeding population of 85,095 AONs. This figure includes a 20% uplift for all birds counted at sea as Philps suggests that his land based counts were on average 20% higher than duplicate sea-based counts. The 1987 count is strongly contested by local birders and by Richard Vaughan (Vaughan 1998) who only reported a 10% increase during this period. However, a separate whole colony count undertaken in 1979 also suggests a population of 80,000+ birds. Assuming the 1987 count is representative it suggests a 56% decline in the last 21 years.

Breeding population trend in Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* at Flamborough/Bempton Cliffs SPA

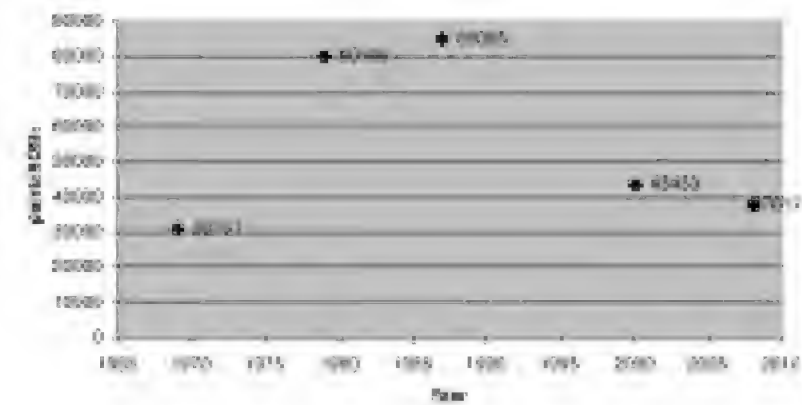


Figure 6: Variation in the breeding population of Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* in the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA.

Productivity – In 2008 breeding productivity was 0.83 fledglings per nest. This suggests a recovery and stabilisation following the collapse in productivity in 2004 (fig 7).

Breeding productivity of Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* at RSPB Bempton Cliffs (1986–2008)

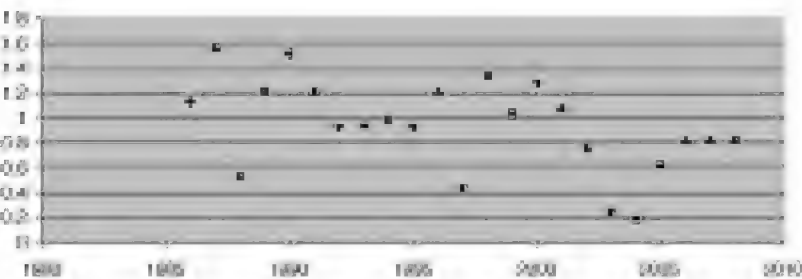


Figure 7: Annual variation in the breeding productivity of the Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* in the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus argenteus*

2008 breeding population – Although the breeding population of Herring Gull is widely distributed across the colony there are number of discrete sub-colonies associated with grassy slopes and knolls e.g. Green Pinnacles, Queen Rock, Bempton Cliffs and Speeton Cliffs. In 2008 a total of 541 AOS were counted.

Population trend – The 2008 count shows a 23% decrease since the Seabird 2000 count of 705 AOS. This appears to be part of an ongoing decline with a 67% decrease since the 1987 Operation Seafarer count of 1246 AOS (Fig 8). This big decrease in the breeding population is in common with similar declines across the UK. The Herring Gull is now listed as a red alert species of conservation concern. It is not known whether the decline in the Herring Gull population in the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA has been offset by changes in the local town nesting Herring Gulls in Bridlington, Scarborough and Filey.

Variation in Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* breeding population at Flamborough Head and RSPB Bempton Cliffs SPA

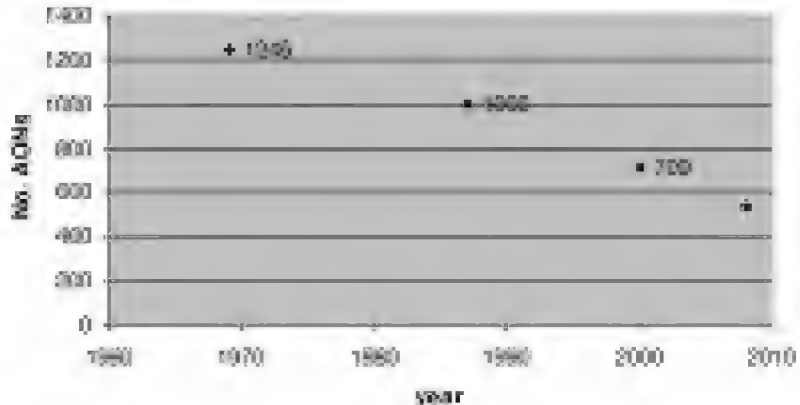


Figure 8: Variation in breeding population of Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* in the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA.

Productivity – there has been no productivity monitoring in the SPA.

GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge*

2008 breeding population – Over half of the English Guillemot population now nest in the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA, with 59,817 individuals being counted in 2008. The birds are concentrated on the highest ledges at Bempton Cliffs and around Breill Nook. A small decline in numbers occurred at the southern limit of the reserve. The SPA holds probably the third highest population of breeding Guillemot in the UK and may support c. 3% of the European population of Guillemot and 5.6% of the British population.

Population trend - there has been a 21% increase in the breeding population since Seabird 2000, when 47,215 individuals were counted, representing an increase of 12,602 birds. This increase was noted across the colony although there were declines in the southern limit of the colony and at Bempton Cliffs where competition from Northern Gannet is reducing the level of increase (Table Two) and, in some cases, causing local reductions in numbers.

Cliff sections without gannets		
17,285	27,855	62% increase
Cliff sections with gannets		
29,400	31,970	8% increase

Table Two: Variation in the rate of Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* population change between Seabird 2000 and the 2008 Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA colony count, with and without nesting Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus*.

The rate of increase in the Guillemot breeding population shows a 470% increase in the Common Guillemot population since 1969 (fig 9) when 12,570 individuals were counted. This growth has occurred at a time when colonies in the Northern Isles have collapsed.

Variation in Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* breeding population at Flamborough Head and RSPB Bempton Cliffs SPA

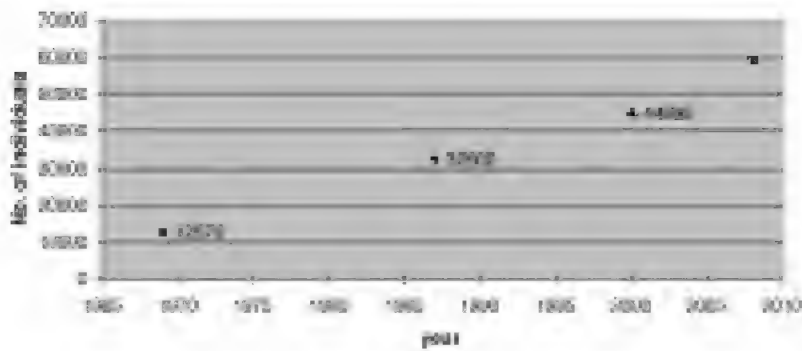


Figure 9: Variation in the breeding population of Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* in the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA.

Productivity – the mean annual productivity of breeding Common Guillemot is 0.7 fledglings per pair. Although little monitoring of breeding productivity has been carried out in recent years the data series suggests that productivity, in contrast to many parts of the UK, is holding up. There is clearly a need to re-establish productivity monitoring of this species.

Breeding productivity of Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* at RSPB Bempton Cliffs (1991–2008)

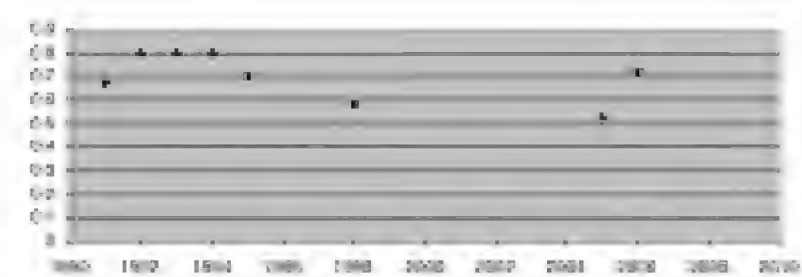


Figure 10: Annual variation in the breeding productivity of Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* in the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA.

RAZORBILL *Alca torda*

2008 breeding population: In 2008 14,956 individuals were counted. Assuming a conversion factor of 1 bird : 0.67 pairs (Harris 1989), suggesting the Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA supports a breeding population of c.10,000 pairs. The SPA now supports c. 5% of the UK and Ireland population and 3% of the European population. However, the count may have been inflated due to high nest attendance levels by both sexes. Unfortunately, it is not known whether these high attendance levels were caused by:

a) high numbers of non-breeders, b) are normal or c) are associated with either a very good or very poor breeding season. It also raises the question whether similar high attendance levels were prevalent in the Guillemot population. It will only be possible to determine this using a marking scheme or bridled birds, although the proportion of bridled birds in the SPA is low at c. 1% (Vaughan 1998).

Population trends: The growth in the Razorbill population from 1,724 individuals in 1969 to 14,956 reflects an 866% increase in the population over a thirty-nine year period (Fig 11). This growth in the breeding population suggests immigration from other colonies may be occurring although there is little evidence to confirm this.

Variation in Razorbill *Alca torda* breeding population (individuals) on Flamborough Head and RSPB Bempton Cliffs SPA

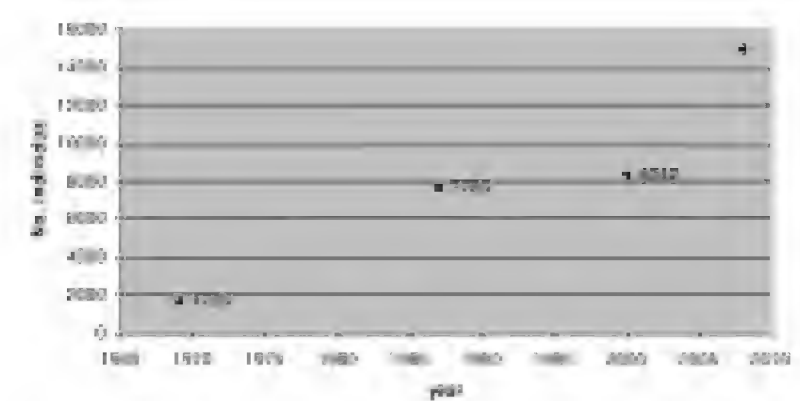


Figure 11: Variation in breeding population of Razorbill *Alca torda* in Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA.

Productivity: There is no systematic monitoring of Razorbill breeding productivity. However, study plots were monitored at RSPB Bempton Cliffs in 2005 and 2006 when productivity was 0.42 and 0.67 fledglings per pair respectively. There is a need to determine levels of productivity.

Mortality: In recent years occasional high levels of adult mortality as a consequence of Salmon gill net by-catch in Filey Bay, in mid-late June and early July, are causing concern.

(ATLANTIC) PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica*

Breeding population 2008: 958 individual birds were counted in the 2008 census with the highest number of birds located around Breill Nook and RSPB Bempton Cliffs. However, the results of the 2008 census were problematic due to the difficulty in observing nesting birds and the unpredictable attendance levels of nest partners. Furthermore, there appeared to be larger numbers of birds, presumably non-breeders, in attendance in the later plot counts.

Population trend: The 2008 census count was 62% lower than Seabird 2000 census when 2500 individuals were counted. Anecdotal observations suggest a significant decline has occurred. The biggest losses appear to be from the upper slopes of the cliffs where birds traditionally nest in rabbit burrows at the base of the boulder clay.

Productivity: No productivity monitoring is carried out for this species.

DISCUSSION

Methodology

The JNCC Seabird 2000 instructions are invaluable for building continuity between seabird censuses. However, the 2008 Census highlighted the need for counts to be undertaken using similar observation periods. The actual time taken counting in 2008 was almost twice that of 2000. This will have invariably resulted in a higher detection rate of those species which nest in more discrete locations e.g. Fulmar, Shag and Razorbill.

The need to train in advance of undertaking the survey by practicing counting at sea, describing plot boundaries and comparing and reviewing individual observers counts is considered critical.

Counts should be undertaken in early June for as long as possible when weather conditions permit. The 2008 Census could have been finished in the

first two weeks of June had the full opportunities been taken. Bad weather almost prevented the census being completed within the recommended time slot. It was apparent that the late June counts meant abandoned nests went undetected and more non-breeders were present, adding further noise to the data.

Land based counts are undoubtedly more accurate but the health and safety risks associated with counting from a cliff top are severe. Therefore, operating from the sea, using a licensed boat operator, in calm and light sea conditions, removes much of that risk.

The breeding seabird assemblage

The SPA was designated in 1993 on the basis of the 1986/87 Seabird census whereby 83,700 pairs of nesting Kittiwake formed 2.6% of the European breeding population.

The citation for the SSSI was the cliffs support internationally important colonies of breeding seabirds with 83,700 pairs of Kittiwake, 32,000 individual Guillemot, 7,700 individual Razorbill, 7,000 individual puffins and 830 pairs of Fulmar. Bempton Cliffs are particularly noted as the only mainland gannetry in the country, with a population of 370 pairs in 1984.

It is evident that substantial changes in the seabird colony have taken place since these designations were made (Table Three). These changes may affect the condition assessment of the SPA.

Species	SPA & SSSI designation populations	Flamborough Head and Bempton Cliffs SPA 2008 colony count	British Population (%)	World Population (%)	% change since designation
Northern fulmar		869	495,617 (NS)		
Northern gannet ¹		6,954	218,546 (3.2%)	1.8%	
European shag		24	26,264 (NS)		
Herring gull ²					
coastal component		541	129,521 (NS)		
Black-legged kittiwake	83,700	37,617	365,787 (10.3%)	Max 1.5%	55% decline
Common guillemot ⁴	32,000	59,817	1,317,788 (4.5%)	0.8%	87% increase
Razorbill ⁴	7,700	14,956	162,968 (9.2%)	2.5%	94% increase
Atlantic puffin	7,000	958	NS		86% decline

Table Three: A comparison of breeding seabird numbers in Great Britain, all Ireland, Channel Islands and Isle of Man. Most figures are from the Seabird 2000 survey (1998–2002) but those for Northern Gannet include more recent updates. All counts are of pairs unless otherwise stated.

¹ Northern Gannet figures are from the complete UK and Ireland survey of colonies in 2003–2005.
² For species which also breed in inland colonies (defined as those >5km from the sea) the coastal component is shown separately.
⁴ Counts are of individuals.

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Special thank also go to Wesley Davies without whom the census would not have been completed. At the outset Wesley volunteered to help with the census when he was not working. In fact he was there, at my side on more days than not, his field skills and companionship helping to make it an enjoyable and rewarding experience. For enabling Wesley to help out so much I'd like to thanks Alan Dalton and the team at RSPB Bempton Cliffs for staffing the visitor centre so that Wesley could help out. Others also helped on the counts including Craig Thomas and Ian Kendall.

Our boat operators, the Emmerson's of North Landing – Norman, Richard, Joanne, Mike, family and friends, all helped out and were remarkable, not only for their knowledge of the area and piloting skills but also because of their encouragement and patience. In this respect I'd like to pay a special thanks to Mike Emmerson, not only for catching the Blue Wrasse but being a good companion on those long days.

The census would not have been possible without the indefatigable support and encouragement of Natural England and in particular, Robbie Fisher, Natural England's North Sea Marine Protected Area Project Manager who not only provided the majority of funding for the 2008 Census but also helped develop the Seabird Research and Monitoring programme which is being developed by Natural England and the RSPB. Caroline Commins, the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Reserve Manager, willingly offered help and provided access to the superb Flamborough Cliffs reserve, as did Martin Burnhill re–the East Riding of Yorkshire Council Flamborough Head Local Nature Reserve.

The RSPB, funded my sabbatical and allowed me to undertake the 2008 Census as a sabbatical project. I hope I have repaid my debt of gratitude in producing this report. Within the RSPB my manager, Harry Bowell, the North England Reserves Manager, encouraged me, as ever, to indulge my obsession.

Lastly, I would like to thank my wife, Clare, for her unstinting support, above and beyond the call of duty, helping with note taking and counts on numerous occasions. – thanks as always.

Keith Clarkson, RSPB Area Reserves Manager. email: keith.clarkson@rspb.org.uk

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Early and Late Dates of Migrants



Species	Earliest Date	Latest Date
Garganey	26th February	28th December
Hobby	21st April	19th October
Little Ringed Plover	14th March	11th September
Whimbrel	27th March	16th October
Wood Sandpiper	22nd April	21st October
Common Sandpiper	26th March	21st October
Little Tern	24th April	12th September
Black Tern	6th April	3rd October
Sandwich Tern	4th April	1st November
Common Tern	10th April	17th October
Roseate Tern	21st June	21st September
Arctic Tern	15th April	5th November
Turtle Dove	27th April	8th September
Cuckoo	7th April	23rd September
Swift	17th April	11th October
Sand Martin	2nd March	13th October
Swallow	30th March	18th November
House Martin	28th March	7th November
Tree Pipit	10th April	2nd November
Yellow Wagtail	5th April	12th November
Redstart	17th April	7th November
Whinchat	21st April	3rd November
Wheatear*	16th March	2nd November
Ring Ouzel	30th March	12th November
Grasshopper Warbler	8th April	27th September
Sedge Warbler	6th April	27th September
Reed Warbler	10th April	5th October
Garden Warbler	16th April	12th November
Lesser Whitethroat	14th April	28th December
Common Whitethroat	8th April	8th November
Wood Warbler	27th April	23rd September
Willow Warbler	24th March	2nd November
Spotted Flycatcher	26th April	4th November
Pied Flycatcher	21st April	15th October

* a Wheatear wintered at Cromer Point, Burniston until 28th February.





Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler (Spurn) ▶ Lee Amery

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler

Spurn

14th September 2008



Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler © John Hewitt

The weekend of 13th to 14th September started well at Spurn. On the Saturday there was a heavy passage of Meadow Pipits during the morning and a liberal scattering of passage migrants along the peninsula, plus a few scarcities such as Barred Warbler to keep the bush-bashing birders' optimism up. The birding news services were keeping us informed of good birds making landfall to the north (notably Flamborough) and south of Spurn (Norfolk), along with a Honey Buzzard invasion in the country, with a single juvenile flying south at Spurn in the early afternoon.

Sunday 14th September dawned with plenty of optimistic birders in the field, although by late morning very few new migrants had been found. Around noon it was clear that migrants were arriving, albeit in small numbers and by mid-afternoon Osprey, Honey Buzzard, Wryneck and Red-backed Shrike had all been found. It was late afternoon when Rich Swales came over the radio – he'd just flushed a Corncrake near Beacon Ponds. He'd watched where it landed and thought the chances of re-finding it were good.

Myself and John Hewitt thought it a good time to end our raptor watch from the caravan park and along with twenty or so other birders made our way up towards Beacon Ponds. As we reached the Listening Dish corner, birders were already heading into the field after the Corncrake and JH moved off in front of me. About 15m up the flood-bank from the corner, a small passerine flushed from close to my feet and immediately darted into the overgrown grass around the fence line a few metres away. Pete Wragg was now just a step behind me and I instantly enquired, "Did you see that, Pete?" "Meadow Pipit?" was his questioned reply, which he clearly didn't believe as he made his way down to the fence in the direction the bird had just disappeared. He flushed it again and it flew past me, over the flood-bank and into a ditch on the other side. "It's got a rufous rump," exclaimed Pete as it disappeared. "Yes, and it's a Gropper," was my equally excited reply. A few minutes later there was no sign, so I started to climb into the ditch, where I located it sitting low in the tangles of a small hawthorn, less than a metre away. Although

it was obscured I was now sure we had a *Locustella* warbler and it didn't look like a Grasshopper Warbler. Incidentally, earlier in the day a *Locustella* warbler near the Observatory had looked 'good' but upon being trapped was proven to be a Grasshopper Warbler.

We were then joined by Karl Dixon and another birder (I apologise for not knowing his name) as the bird flushed again, and they confirmed that it did indeed show an obviously rusty rump. I suggested to Pete that maybe we should leave it to settle, look for the Corncrake and return mob-handed to look again. Fortunately he was thinking far clearer than I was, and told me what a crass suggestion I had just made and that we should not lose the bird!

It flushed again and returned to the rank grass along the fence line. Karl picked it out and we had a decent head-on view before it dived into cover again. We were slowly piecing together a picture: it was a large *Locustella* warbler with a fairly long tail and rather rounded wings. The rump was strikingly rufous and contrasted with a very dark looking tail and a browner back with obvious streaking on the upperparts. There was breast streaking in a gorget on a yellowish background. We'd seen nothing on the wing patterns and the head looked surprisingly bland and plain. This last point was a bit puzzling. We'd seen the head reasonably well and not seen a pale supercilium – a feature I thought we should have seen if it was going to be a Pallas's Grasshopper, yet everything else we'd seen was pointing towards this species.

By now the would-be Corncrake observers, having failed, were asking over the radios why we were looking so intently into the grass and ditch. Clearly we were not going to get the chance to sort this for sure ourselves and advised them they had better get over to us. About ten Spurn regulars joined us and we flushed the bird again. It flew from the fence line back over the flood bank and into the ditch.

Everyone could see it looked large and bulky with a clear rufous rump, and Garry Taylor reckoned he saw white tips to the tail as it fanned it just as it dived into cover!

Time to trap it. Word was put out of a possible Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler and people were arriving all the time. Trying to flush it again would have been stupid, so Pete Wragg climbed down into the ditch to try to stop it working its way into cover and we all waited for a ringer. Barry Spence arrived and quickly gave Dave Hursthouse a rollicking for leaving the sea-watching hut with his telescope just before a probable drake King Eider flew past! He then put a net up.

The wind was blowing the net badly but Barry told us how he thought he would catch it. The dike was walked in the direction of the net, and beyond

the net, the warbler flushed, flew over the flood-bank, doubled back and straight into the net ... it bounced ... and then it tried again and this time bagged itself, just as Barry predicted it would! (He never mentioned about it bouncing though.) As Barry grabbed the net to make sure it couldn't escape everything came together – it did have a pronounced pale supercilium, a rufous rump and darker tail, and absolutely gorgeous white tips to all the tail feathers bar the central two. We had Yorkshire's first PG Tips!

News was put out, the bird was taken to Kew Villa where it was processed and then displayed to the gathered birders in the adjacent car park of the Crown & Anchor. It was a juvenile in excellent condition and very heavy, weighing 17.2 grams (the usual weight of a Grasshopper Warbler is about 14 grams). At this weight and the fact it had a fat score of 3 (3 being the highest) it seems highly likely that it wasn't a new arrival and may well have been present a few days.

Description (mostly in the hand)

Size and shape: appeared larger and bulkier than a Grasshopper Warbler in the field and this was confirmed by its weight. The wings were rather short and rounded in flight, with the tail being fairly long and noticeably broad. In the hand, the tail was very broad, full and graduated, with the central two feathers being the longest.

Head: a generally dark crown mottled with darker streaks and paler flecks. A creamy supercilium reached from the base of the bill to the rear of the ear coverts and although narrow it was usually obvious on a otherwise plain face. However, at some angles the supercilium seemed to disappear (even in the hand) making the head appear plain and bland, and explains why we did not see this feature in the field. The ear coverts were dappled dark brown, similar to the crown.

Upperparts: the mantle and back were a fairly warm brown streaked with broad blackish lines. The rump was the most obvious thing about the bird in the field – strikingly rufous reaching onto the upper tail coverts and in the hand lightly streaked black. In the field, the tail appeared an oily black, strongly contrasting with the rufous rump. The white tips to all the tail feathers (except the central two) were striking and extremely distinct in the hand, although in the field I couldn't see them even though I was looking hard for this feature. The primaries were very dark with indistinct pale tips in the hand. Greater-coverts were black centred with broad rufous-brown edges. The tertials were blackish centred with

a narrow sharply defined pale edge and a broader and whiter tip, although this latter feature was by no means obvious and probably wouldn't have been seen in the field even with an excellent view.

Underparts: generally an ochre-yellow. An untidy gorget of thin irregular dark streaks was confined to the upper breast. The remainder of the underparts appeared unmarked. The underside of the tail mirrored the upperside with the distinct white tips.

Bill: pointed, fairly long. Mostly orange-yellow with a dark top half to the upper mandible.

Legs: pinkish.

It was released in the scrub at the south-eastern end of the canal zone where it immediately went to ground. A small crowd (who had earlier dipped) gathered here and eventually had brief views just before dusk. It wasn't to be found the following morning.

There are four sub-species of Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola*, with the race *rubescens* being the most likely vagrant to Britain. There are also a further two east Asian *Locustella* warblers that form a superspecies with Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler and although unlikely it is just feasible that one of them could reach western Europe. Middendorff's Warbler *L. ochotensis* is a long-distance migrant and shares the white-tipped tail of Pallas's Groppa. It is, however, a much paler washed-

out form with little dark streaking and a broader, paler supercilium. Pleske's Warbler *L. pleskei* is a short-distance migrant that is larger and plainer and very unlikely to occur in Europe.

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler breeds from western Siberia eastwards to Japan and winters in south China to south-east Asia. There have been 37 previous British records, mostly on the Northern Isles and it is a very rare bird in England with just five previous occurrences:

Norfolk, Cley on 13th September 1976

Northumberland, Farne Isles on 26th October 1985

Dorset, Portland on 13th September 1996

Norfolk, Blakeney Point on 22nd to 24th September 2001

Northumberland, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea on 29th September 2001

This is the first proven record for Spurn and Yorkshire. I use the word proven as there have been a couple of other strongly suspected occurrences at Spurn (and maybe elsewhere) during recent autumns, but these all got away. One thing I do feel confident about: more will follow and be proven.

Graham Speight



Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler © Ian Smith



Grasshopper Warbler (for comparison) © Ray Scally

Brown Shrike

Flamborough Head

24th–25th September 2008



Brown Shrike © Ray Scally

At 1515hrs on 24th September Andrew Allport (AMA) noticed a shrike pop up on the top of bushes as he walked along Old Fall Hedge. He immediately realised he was looking at an adult-type eastern shrike, took a few photos and continued to watch the bird until it was disturbed by a walker. It promptly disappeared and Andrew left to study the images, while also bumping into Ian Marshall and informing him of the bird's presence.

By coincidence Keith Clarkson was in the same area 30 minutes later and relocated the shrike adjacent to Old Fall. Quickly joined by other locals and by the returning AMA, the news was released which triggered the UK's first mainland Brown Shrike twitch.

A car park was arranged in a field owned by the local farmer, Simon Waines, and signs erected in the dead of night. The first couple of hours the next day saw the shrike give everyone the run around, temporarily looking settled on the eastern side of Old Fall Hedge it then decided to fly high towards the 'bay brambles'.

After a blank hour it was re-found to the north of Lighthouse Road and it finally settled on a hedge near the Golf Course, where incredibly it was joined by a Red-backed Shrike. The large head/bill structure and long tail of the Brown Shrike was especially obvious in comparison with its commoner cousin; a short primary projection also helped contribute to the long-tailed impression.

Plumage wise there was a black mask through the eye which was relieved by a white supercilium and warm brown crown/upperparts and tail; the latter graduated with shorter outer-tail feathers. The tertials

showed narrow pale margins and plain primaries lacked a pale patch at their base. The flanks and belly sides were suffused with a sulphur yellow wash, which was quite distinct in certain light.

Although present until dusk on 25th there was no sign of the shrike the following day. The behaviour of most birders on this twitch was excellent. Members of the Flamborough Bird Observatory and RSPB helped manage the crowd and access was arranged so everyone could stand in a field to observe the bird safely. Unfortunately this was only granted for the top of the field and a little distant for the now obligatory stunning rare bird photos.

A total of £1110 was raised on the second day with the proceeds divided between St Catherine's Hospice and the Flamborough Bird Observatory who are committed to making annual donations to bird conservation projects on the Headland. Thanks once again to the Waines family, especially Simon, Richard and Pat who did an excellent job raising funds on the car park.

There are four races of Brown Shrike breeding across Asia, with the nominate *cristatus* wintering in India and south-east Asia. The Flamborough individual represents the fifth for the UK and the first on the mainland, with three of the previous records appearing on Shetland. There has also been an upsurge in records elsewhere in Europe with a record in Ireland in 1999 and records from at least six other countries; the first appearing as recently as 1984 in Sweden.

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

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March • Red Grouse (Arkengarthdale) ▶ Marcus Conway



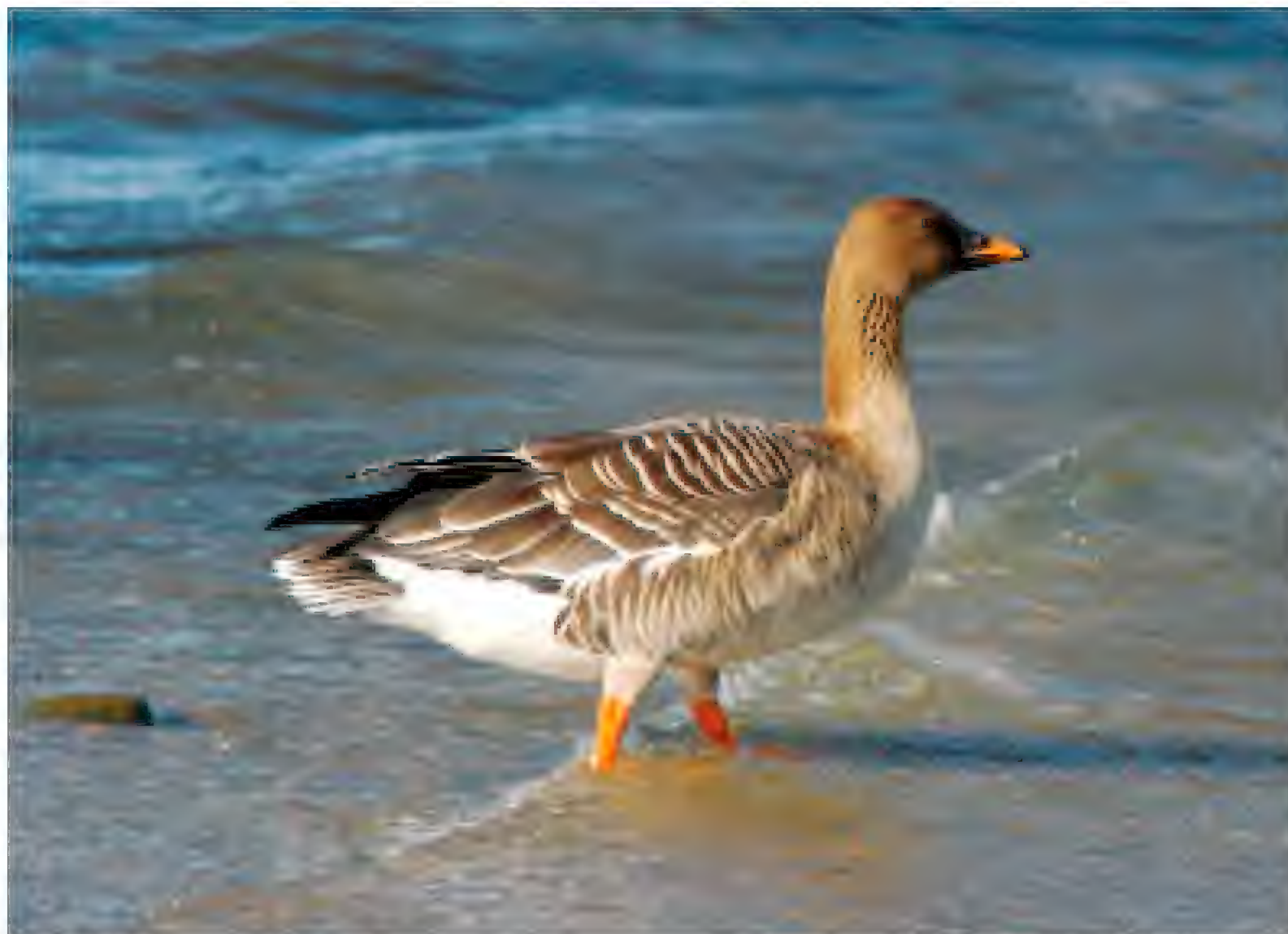
January • Desert Wheatear (Burniston) ▶ Iain Leach



January • Black Redstart (Filey) ▶ Dave Mansell



February • Black-throated Diver (Burton Riggs) ▶ Steve Race



February • Bean Goose (Hornsea Mere) ▶ Michael Flowers



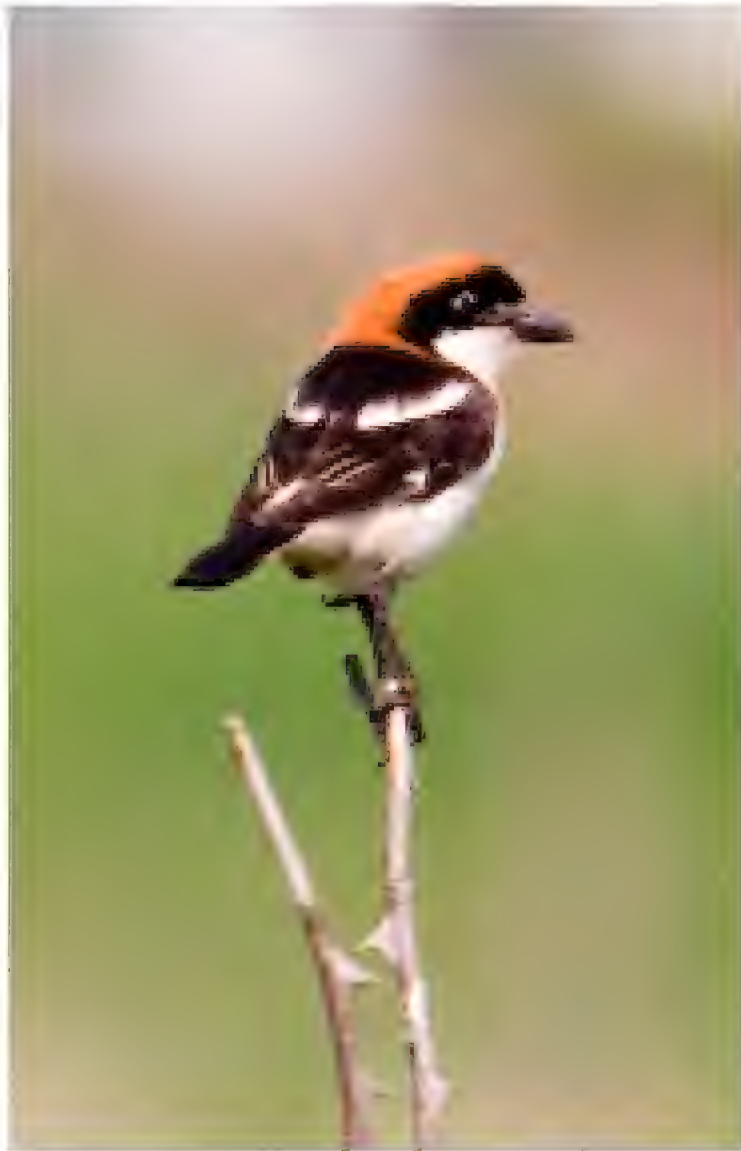
March • American Wigeon (Rother Valley CP) ▶ Ron Marshall



February • Black-bellied Dipper (Wansford) ▶ Marcus Conway



April • King Eider (Flamborough) ▶ Steve Race



May • Woodchat Shrike (Spurn) ▶ Marcus Conway



May • Dotterel (Danby Beacon) ▶ Steve Race



May • Dartford Warbler (Blacka Moor) ▶ Ron Marshall



May • Hoopoe (Scalby Lodge Farm) ▶ Dave Mansell



May • Spotted Flycatcher (Spurn) ▶ Ron Marshall



May • Red-footed Falcon (Pugney's CP) ▶ Marcus Conway



July • Gannet (Bempton) ▶ David Cookson



June • Red-backed Shrike (Burniston) ▶ Steve Race



July • Peregrine Falcon (Scarborough) ▶ Steve Race



August • Golden Plover chick (Whiteholme Res) ▶ Sean Gray



September • Great Snipe (Speeton) ▶ Mark Thomas



September • Black Stork (Spurn) ▶ Mike Ashforth



September • Rose-coloured Starling (Burniston) ► Dave Mansell



September • Honey Buzzard (East Ayton) ► Dave Mansell



September • Great Grey Shrike (Spurn) ► Simon Mitchie



September • Red-breasted Flycatcher (Flamborough) ► Dave Mansell



September • Cuckoo (Sammy's Point) ▶ Michael Flowers



October • Curlew Sandpiper (Seamer Tip Pools) ▶ Dave Mansell



October • Pallas's Warbler (Flamborough) ▶ Mark Thomas



October • Subalpine Warbler (Bempton) ▶ Marcus Conway



November • Pied Wheatear (Reighton) ▶ Marcus Conway



November • Siberian Stonechat (Easington) ▶ Iain Leach



November • Tawny Owl (Ogden Water) ▶ Sean Gray



November • Two-barred Crossbill (Bilsdale) ▶ Dave Mansell



December • Mediterranean Gull (Holbeck) ▶ Dave Mansell



November • Iceland Gull (Scarborough) ▶ Dave Mansell



December • Rough-legged Buzzard (Millington) ▶ Marcus Conway



December • Waxwing (Bramley) ▶ Marcus Conway

List of Contributors



The following observers have contributed records to this report, with apologies for any omissions. Either they have submitted records directly, or have contributed to a local report used to compile the systematic list. The Editor thanks all who have submitted records.

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W Adams
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NW Addey (NWA)
R Ahmed (RA)
J Aistrop
PJ Alker
D Allen
PJ Allenby
R Allinson
KJ Allison
AM Allport (AMA)
J Allsop
P Alvey
A Amery
CE Andrassey
K Andrews
A Andruchiw
RH Appleby (RHA)
J Appleyard (JAp)
A Archer
M Archer
MG Archer
R Archer
B Armitage (BA)
J Armstrong
Prof WG Arnott
M Ashforth
PJ Ashman
A Ashton (AAs)
D Ashton
P Ashton
J Ashton-Booth
IA Ashworth
MRK Askew (MRKA)
R Askwith
B Aspin (BAs)
R Arundale (RAr)
HR Atack
R Atkin
P Atkins
H Atkinson
JE Atkinson
I Austin (IA)
M Ayres
W Baggerley
P Bagguley
D Bailey
P Bailey
S Bailey
RA Baines (RAB)
A Bairstow

P Baker
R Baker
K Balkow
L Ball
T Banton (TB)
C Barber
I Barbnes
L&M Bardwell
DC Barker
J Barker (JB)
Je Barker
K Barnard (KB)
MH Barnes
R Barnes
M Barnett (MB)
A Barr
H Barrett
M Barrett
P Barrett
K Bartlett
C Barwick
S Barwick
P Bateman
D Bateson
JM Bayldon
R Bays
D Beaman (DB)
JA Beaumont
DV Beeken
AR Bell
D Bell
M Bell
SC Bell (SCB)
MJ Bellas
R Beltoul
L Bendell
E Bennett
GR Bennett (GRB)
Y Bennett
R Berrington
C Best
I Beverage
R Bickford
C Bielby
IS Biggin
T Bingham
RW Bird
SM Bird
P Bishop
B Blackburn
MR Blackburn
PA Blackburn
D Blackmore
M Blackmore
SM Blacksmith
S Blain (SB)
M Bland
MA Blick (MAB)

M Bloomfield
B Boize
RJ Boland (RJB)
JH Bolton
J Bonner
R Boon
A Booth
D Booth
R Borwick
I Boston (IB)
WI Boustead (WIB)
R Bowles
PK Bowman (PKB)
K Boyer
B Boyle
DP Boyle
A Bradford
JM Bradley
M Bradshaw
R Bradshaw
G Braithwaite
R Braithwaite
R Bream
J Bremner
M Brennan (MBr)
M Brew (MBre)
G Briggs
P Briglin
P Brindle
RW Brock (RWB)
C Brogdale
C&S Broke
D Brooks
P Brothers
H Broughton
R Broughton
RK Broughton
D Brown
J Brown
K Brown
MF Brown
PL Brown (PLB)
R Brown
J Brownbridge
JA Brownson
L Bruce (LB)
E Brunswick
GM Brunton
D&S Bryan
BGA Buckle
P Burke
S Burns
RJ Butcher
S Butler
C Butterfield
R Butterfield
J Buxton
DM Bye (DMB)

RJ Bye
MP Calvert
S&D Came
R Campbell
J Carbutt-Lang
PJ Carlton (PJC)
G Carr
J Carr (JCa)
M Carr
P Carr
I Carrick
D Carroll
R Carson
SA Carson
C Carter
M Carter
N Carter
R Carter
T Carter
A Cawthrow
P Chalmers
B Chambers
R&J Chandler
R&M Chandler
CS Chapman
G Chapman (GCh)
S Chappel
R Charles
TD Charlton (TDC)
PJW Charlton
J Charnock
S Chippendale
PE Chisell
J Clarke
Mr/Mrs GA Clark (GAC)

R Clarke (RC)
K Clarkson (KC)
GM Clay
J Clay
M Clay
E Clayton
JE Clayton
T Cleeves
P Cleford
S Clifton
EW Clubley
D Coate
M Cobley
A Cockroft (AC)
S Cochrane (SC)
J Colclough
P Colley
P Collins (PCo)
T Collins
RC Collis
M Constantine
M Conway

S Conyers
JM Cook
M Cook
S Cook
A Cooper
J Cooper (JC)
CJ Cope
B Copley
TI Corbett (TIC)
D Cottee
R Coursey
IR Court
M Coverdale
T Cowley
M Cowton (MC)
M Cox
G Craven
J Crawshaw
K&S Crean
HM Creber (HMC)
A Credland
R Crosby
J Crowther
PA Crowther
RJ Croxton
M Cunningham
P Cunningham (PC)
P&M Cunningham
M&WF Curtis
WF Curtis
JE Dale
BF Damper
G Davies
J&TG Davies (J&TGD)
S Davies
J Davis
R Davis
B Dawson
D Dawson (DD)
MH Dawtrey
NC Dawtrey
PL Dawtrey
J Day
GA Dayes (GAD)
BM Dean
LJ Degnan (LJD)
A Deighton (AD)
P Delaloye
L Demaine
G Denison
J Denney
T Denney
ML Denton
M Dersley
O Dewhurst (OD)
BM Dickinson
K Dickinson
AS Disley (ASD)
CR Dixon (CRD)
D Dixon
T Dixon (TD)
GE Dobbs (GED)
JP Dobinson (JPD)
C Dodsworth (CD)
P Doherty
P Dove
H Doveson
M Doveson
J Dowd
S Downing
P Drabble

A Drake
F Drake
M Drake
A Draper
R Dresser
R Drew (RD)
J Drury
M Drury
PG Drury
B Dudhill
W Dudhill (WD)
IM Duffy
M Dugmore
JB Dunnett (JBD)
R Dunsford
K Dutheridge
K Dutton
C Dye
JB Dye
R Dyson
A Earle
N Easton
FL Eastwood
I Edgar (IE)
D Edwards
A Elliott
SC Elliot (SCE)
G Ellis
WA Ely
B Emson (BE)
C Evans (CE)
M Evans
A Evers
R&S Evison
S Exley (SE)
G Facer
L Facer
V Fairbrother
R Fairclough
DG Fairweather
MK Fanshawe
K Fawcett
C Featherstone
G Featherstone (GF)
GH Featherstone
T Feltham
MG Fenner
J Ferguson
B Fiendley
DR CH Fletcher
T Fletcher
J Flood
MJ Flowers (MJF)
CH Flynn
D Forbes
A Ford (AFo)
D Ford
A Forsyth (AF)
K Foston
R Fowling
H Francis
M Francis (MF)
PR French
J Frost
RJ Fuller
SL Furber
J Gallagher
JLC Gandy
J Garbutt (JGA)
C Garner
M Garner (MG)

MGH Garnett
C Gaughan (CG)
R Gaynor
AJ Gear
P Gee
N Genn (NG)
E Gent
G Gent
AJ Gibson (AJG)
C Gibson
D Gibson
S Gibson
A Gilbert
M Gill
L Gillard (LG)
D Gilroy
KR Gittens
I Glaves (IG)
J Glendinning
N Glenn
D Goate
D Goodwin
SJ Goodwin
P Goucher
AG Gough (AGG)
KR Gould (KRG)
A Grace (AG)
A Grainger
G Grainger
RA Grainger
J Gramauskas
G Granger
S Gray
P Grba
R Greasley (RG)
D Greaves
PK Greaves
E Green (EG)
G Green
J Green
K Green
S Green
M Greenland
C Gretton
P Grice
PR Griffin
B Griffith
GE Griffith
J Griffiths
S Griffiths
M Grindle
J Grist (JG)
S Gwilliam (SGw)
F Haigh
GL Haigh
G Halden
J Hall (JHa)
J Hamilton (JHam)
AM Hanby (AMH)
J Hancox
M Hancox
CP Hansell (CPH)
D Harding
R Hargreaves
S Hargreaves
JD Harman (JDH)
ME Harman
RD Harman (RDHa)
RDR Harman
JT Harriman (JTH)
C Harris (CHa)

R Harris
D Harrison (DHa)
P Harrison
N Hart (NH)
T Hartley
J Harwood
A Hawkins
M Hayes
A Hayhow
KJ Hayhow
I Hedge (IH)
EJ Hediger (EJH)
ME Hemmingway
JC Heppenstall
RI Heppenstall
D Heptinstall
N Heptinstall
S Hepton (SHe)
D Herringshaw
W Hesketh
J Hesslewood
B Hewitt
J Hewitt (JHe)
S Hey (SH)
G Heywood
Ja Higgins
Jo Higgins
C Higson
RD Hill (RDH)
S Hill
C Hine
SJ Hinley (SJH)
JP Hirschfield
AD Hirst
D Hobson (DHo)
DG Hobson (DGH)
J Hobson
TL Hobson (TLH)
K Hockridge
MG Hodges
J Hodgson
J Holliday
A Holmes
BM Holmes
G Holmes (GH)
A Hood (AH)
ME Hopper
RN Hopper (RNH)
C Horne (CH)
T&V Horsfall
J Horton (JHo)
GM Horwood
R Hoskins
D Howard
P&P Howes
B Hoyle
S Hoyle (SHo)
G Hudson
GP Hudson
D Hunter
DI Hunton
D Hursthouse (DH)
E Hutchinson
KS Hutchinson
AA Hutt (AAH)
A Huyton (AHu)
C Hyde
PV Irving
T Isherwood (Ti)
L Ives
PW Izzard

G Jackson (GJ)	G Leeming	R Moat
J Jackson	RE Leighton (REL)	V Moat
JJ Jackson	CL Leonard	K Moir (KM)
B James	P Leonard	FX Moffatt (FXM)
HT James	PC Leonard	DA Money (DAM)
D Jarrold	D Lidster	JR Money (JRMo)
J Jarrold	C Lilley	M Moore
I Jennings	K Limb	B Morfitt
P Jepson	P Linger	A Morgan
AF Johnson (AFJ)	M Linnington	G Morgan
CG Johnson (CGJ)	J Linton–Smith	J Morgan
D Johnson	JK Lister	S Morgan (SMo)
S Johnson	SM Lister (SML)	B&S Morland
S Johnstone (SJ)	BD Littlewood	J&M Morley
C Jones	A Lodge	D Morris
F Jones	M Lonsdale	PR Morris (PRM)
NA Jones (NAJ)	B Lound	PW Morris
P Jones	A Lowe	S Morris
IA Jordan	D Lowe	D&P Moss
J Jordan	RJ Lowe	PL Mountain (PLM)
SM Jordan	A Lowry	B Mullett
A Jowett	K Luxford	B Murphy
T Jowsey	R Lyon (RL)	P Murphy
R Kay	A MacNicoll	F Murray
T Keeler	N Major	FAE Murray
I Keeton	A Malley (AMa)	P Nash
A&A Kelly	E Maltby	WB Naylor
I Kendall (IK)	D Mansell (DM)	MG Neal
F Kennington	R Mantaj	MG Neale
PW Kent (PWK)	P March	B Needle
CR Kenyon	P Marsh	JA Newbould
JS Kenyon	Y Marsh	I Nicholson
R Kenyon	A Marshall	N Nickerson (NN)
S Kenyon	DC Marshall	K Norrie
N Kershaw	I Marshall (IM)	A Norris (AN)
T Kettle	D Martin	A Nunn
BM Keywood	E Martin	MA Oates
D&H Kidman	J Martin (JMa)	D Odell
M Kilburn	PG Martin (PGM)	B Oliver
CJ King	T Martin	J Oliver
LS King	P&P Maske	N Oliver
PC King	D Mason	J Olley (JO)
IR Kingsworth	JR Mather	J O'Malley
DR AMG Kinnear	A Mawson	A O'Neill
J Kirby	D McAleavy	T O'Neill
M Kirby	L McBride	C O'Shea
HR Kirk	T McCormick	P Ottoway
P Kirk	C McEvoy	J Owen
S Kitchen	T McEvoy (TMc)	K&E Padgett
R Knapp	A McInnes	A Page
R Knight	CR McKay	D Page (DP)
R Knock	A McKee	M Paine (MP)
S Kohler	J McLoughlin	L Pannett
D&H Kramer	C McNaghton	G Pardy
A Kraus (AK)	GN Megson (GNM)	J Park
D Lafever	MC Melchoir	A Parker
T Lally	MG Metcalfe	EC Parker (ECP)
S Lamb	A Mettam	R&A Parker
LS Lancaster	R Mew	S Parker
M Larner	DR Middleton	C Parkin
P Larner	J Middleton (JM)	J Parkin
PA Lassey (PAL)	L Middleton	H Parkin (HP)
J Law	V&K Midgley	PD Parkin
SR Laycock	F Miles	RT Parrish (RTP)
GPk Leach	A Miller	V Parslow
GY Leach	G Miller	N Parton
I Leach	C Milner	S Pashby
JB Leason	H Mitchell (HM)	J Patient
G Lee	MG Mitchell	P Patrick
P Lee	RD Mitchell	DM Pearce (DMP)
BD Leecy	S Mitchie (SM)	JM Pearson (JMP)

S Pedley	S Pedley
S Peel (SP)	S Peel (SP)
B Pepper	B Pepper
C Percy	C Percy
M Perry	M Perry
J Pewtress	J Pewtress
G Phillips	G Phillips
L Phipps	L Phipps
D Pickering	D Pickering
J&R Pickering	J&R Pickering
N Pickering	N Pickering
G Picton (GP)	G Picton (GP)
MJ Pilsworth (MJP)	MJ Pilsworth (MJP)
D Platt (DPI)	D Platt (DPI)
R Platts	R Platts
DM Pogson (DMPo)	DM Pogson (DMPo)
S Pogson (SPo)	S Pogson (SPo)
J Poland	J Poland
C&D Pollard	C&D Pollard
R Pope	R Pope
A Porter	A Porter
R Porter	R Porter
JD Postlethwaite	JD Postlethwaite
P Prescott	P Prescott
J Preshaw	J Preshaw
D Prest	D Prest
NA Preston (NAP)	NA Preston (NAP)
D Price	D Price
J Price	J Price
B Priest	B Priest
M Priestley	M Priestley
MV Priestly	MV Priestly
D Proctor	D Proctor
RH Proctor (RHP)	RH Proctor (RHP)
M Quinlan	M Quinlan
S Race (SRa)	S Race (SRa)
S Radcliffe	S Radcliffe
A Raine	A Raine
CS Ralston (CSR)	CS Ralston (CSR)
A Rands	A Rands
J Raven (JRa)	J Raven (JRa)
PL Rawson (PLR)	PL Rawson (PLR)
SJ Rawson (SJR)	SJ Rawson (SJR)
K Reed	K Reed
R Reed	R Reed
MN Reeder (MNR)	MN Reeder (MNR)
J Reeman	J Reeman
J Regan (JR)	J Regan (JR)
P Rex	P Rex
T Rhodes	T Rhodes
W Rich	W Rich
B Richards (BR)	B Richards (BR)
C Richardson	C Richardson
M Richardson	M Richardson
R Richardson	R Richardson
G Rickers	G Rickers
CM Ridgeway	CM Ridgeway
P Ridsdale	P Ridsdale
P Rigg	P Rigg
J Riley	J Riley
P&M Riley	P&M Riley
A Roadhouse (AR)	A Roadhouse (AR)
J Roberts	J Roberts
M Roberts	M Roberts
A Robertshaw (ARo)	A Robertshaw (ARo)
CC Robinson (CCR)	CC Robinson (CCR)
I Robinson	I Robinson
J Robinson	J Robinson
L Robinson (LR)	L Robinson (LR)
M Robinson (MRo)	M Robinson (MRo)
N Robinson	N Robinson

P&M Robinson	P&M Robinson
S Robinson	S Robinson
M Robson	M Robson
S Roddis	S Roddis
P Roe	P Roe
K Roebuck (KRo)	K Roebuck (KRo)
S Roebuck (SR)	S Roebuck (SR)
AM Rogers	AM Rogers
P Rogers	P Rogers
RB Rogers	RB Rogers
T Rogers	T Rogers
SM Root	SM Root
AJ Ross	AJ Ross
R Rosser	R Rosser
N Rossiter	N Rossiter
K Rotherham (KR)	K Rotherham (KR)
M Rotherham (MR)	M Rotherham (MR)
PC Rowarth (PCR)	PC Rowarth (PCR)
MD Rowbottom (MDR)	MD Rowbottom (MDR)
G Royston	G Royston
R&P Rumbold	R&P Rumbold
V Rushworth (VR)	V Rushworth (VR)
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A Sagwell	A Sagwell
E Salf	E Salf
P Salter	P Salter
E Sanders	E Sanders
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JM Saville	JM Saville
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E Scarfe	E Scarfe
PL Scott	PL Scott
R Scott	R Scott
RJ Scott (RJS)	RJ Scott (RJS)
T Scott (TS)	T Scott (TS)
A Scutt	A Scutt
R Sears (RSe)	R Sears (RSe)
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JE Seeviour (JES)	JE Seeviour (JES)
G Sellors	G Sellors
NP Senior (NPS)	NP Senior (NPS)
K Sharpe	K Sharpe
M Sharpe	M Sharpe
J Shaw	J Shaw
M Shaw	M Shaw
J Shearer	J Shearer
P Sheehan	P Sheehan
J Sheldon (JSh)	J Sheldon (JSh)
K&K Shemwell	K&K Shemwell
G Shentall	G Shentall
I Shentall	I Shentall
A Shepherd	A Shepherd
M Shepherd	M Shepherd
V Shepherd	V Shepherd
C&D Shields	C&D Shields
G Shilton	G Shilton
G Short	G Short
PC Short (PCS)	PC Short (PCS)
T Silvester	T Silvester
G Simon	G Simon
B Simpson	B Simpson
D Simpson	D Simpson
DJ Simpson	DJ Simpson
DW Simpson	DW Simpson
J Singleton	J Singleton
K&K Singleton	K&K Singleton
SP Singleton	SP Singleton
JW Slack	JW Slack
RS Slack (RSS)	RS Slack (RSS)
P Slade	P Slade

P Slase	P Slase
B Slater	B Slater
C Slator	C Slator
MA Smethurst (MAS)	MA Smethurst (MAS)
DR AHV Smith	DR AHV Smith
GM Smith	GM Smith
H Smith	H Smith
I Smith (IS)	I Smith (IS)
JL Smith	JL Smith
JN Smith	JN Smith
K Smith	K Smith
M Smith	M Smith
P Smith (PS)	P Smith (PS)
PJW Smith	PJW Smith
BK Smithson	BK Smithson
C Smithson	C Smithson
R Smithson (RSm)	R Smithson (RSm)
M Snook	M Snook
AJ Snowden	AJ Snowden
J Snowden	J Snowden
LJ Sollitt	LJ Sollitt
T Spall	T Spall
GJ Speight (GJS)	GJ Speight (GJS)
BR Spence (BRS)	BR Spence (BRS)
K&K Spencer	K&K Spencer
M Spradbery	M Spradbery
RJ Sprakes (RJSp)	RJ Sprakes (RJSp)
SP St Pierre	SP St Pierre
D Stables	D Stables
C Stacey	C Stacey
DJ Standring (DJSt)	DJ Standring (DJSt)
M Stansfield	M Stansfield
J Stanton	J Stanton
JM Saville (JMS)	JM Saville (JMS)
L Stead	L Stead
MF Stead	MF Stead
D Stephenson	D Stephenson
P Stephenson	P Stephenson
HR Sterne	HR Sterne
M Stirland	M Stirland
CA Stobbs	CA Stobbs
M Stone	M Stone
M&F Stone	M&F Stone
AJ Stoyle (AJS)	AJ Stoyle (AJS)
MF Stoyle (MFS)	MF Stoyle (MFS)
MG Stoyle (MGS)	MG Stoyle (MGS)
C Straker	C Straker
A Strangeway	A Strangeway
R Strangeway	R Strangeway
A Summersgill	A Summersgill
B Sumner (BS)	B Sumner (BS)
DJ Sutcliffe	DJ Sutcliffe
R Sutherland	R Sutherland
K Sutton	K Sutton
RJ Swales (RJS)	RJ Swales (RJS)
H Swinglehurst (HS)	H Swinglehurst (HS)
D Sykes (DSy)	D Sykes (DSy)
A Symonds	A Symonds
P Talbot	P Talbot
N Tasker	N Tasker
MK Taunton	MK Taunton
A Taylor	A Taylor
B Taylor	B Taylor
GC Taylor (GCT)	GC Taylor (GCT)
J Taylor (JT)	J Taylor (JT)
P Taylor	P Taylor
R Taylor (RT)	R Taylor (RT)
RC Taylor (RCT)	RC Taylor (RCT)
S Thackery	S Thackery
J&J Thickett	J&J Thickett
JA Thickett	JA Thickett

JR Thickett	JR Thickett
L Thickett	L Thickett
CC Thomas (CCT)	CC Thomas (CCT)
G Thomas	G Thomas
M Thomas (MT)	M Thomas (MT)
A Thompson	A Thompson
B Thompson	B Thompson
C Thomson (CT)	C Thomson (CT)
J Thompson (JTh)	J Thompson (JTh)
MJ Thompson	MJ Thompson
D Thornley (DT)	D Thornley (DT)
P Thorpe	P Thorpe
RT Thorpe	RT Thorpe
G Threlfall (GT)	G Threlfall (GT)
M Timmins (MTi)	M Timmins (MTi)
R Tite	R Tite
G Todd	G Todd
P Tomlinson	P Tomlinson
A Tongue	A Tongue
JL Topham	JL Topham
D Townsend	D Townsend
PT Treloar (PTT)	PT Treloar (PTT)
P Trueblood	P Trueblood
T Tudor	T Tudor
K Tupholme	K Tupholme
S Tupholme	S Tupholme
D Turner	D Turner
JM Turton (JMT)	JM Turton (JMT)
T Tveit	T Tveit
B&M Twist	B&M Twist
R Twigg (RTw)	R Twigg (RTw)
P Urquhart (PU)	P Urquhart (PU)
B Van der Ven	B Van der Ven
T Vaughan	T Vaughan
DJ Venus	DJ Venus
B Vickers (BV)	B Vickers (BV)
H Vilkaitis	H Vilkaitis
I Vine	I Vine
DM Waddington (DMW)	DM Waddington (DMW)
M Wade	M Wade
R Wade	R Wade
S Wadsworth	S Wadsworth
SD Waite	SD Waite
L Walduck	L Walduck
A Walker (AW)	A Walker (AW)
ID Walker	ID Walker
J Walker (JWal)	J Walker (JWal)
E Wall	E Wall
DIM Wallace (DIMW)	DIM Wallace (DIMW)
M Wallshaw	M Wallshaw
G Walsh (GW)	G Walsh (GW)
D Walters	D Walters
D Warburton	D Warburton
J Warburton	J Warburton
D Ward	D Ward
DAP Ward (DAPW)	DAP Ward (DAPW)
JL Ward	JL Ward
J Ward (JW)	J Ward (JW)
P Ward	P Ward
M Warren	M Warren
SP&JC Warwick (SP&JCW)	SP&JC Warwick (SP&JCW)
J Wasse (JWa)	J Wasse (JWa)
DRJ Watkins	DRJ Watkins
J Watkins	J Watkins
AD Watson	AD Watson
R Watson	R Watson
T Watson	T Watson
D Waudby (DW)	D Waudby (DW)
B Waugh	B Waugh

AD Weaver	AD Weaver
I Webster	I Webster
L&J Webster	L&J Webster
B Wells	B Wells
M Wells (MW)	M Wells (MW)
PS Wells	PS Wells
R Welton	R Welton
W West	W West
T Wheatear	T Wheatear
D Wheeler	D Wheeler
PA Wheway	PA Wheway
L White	L White
S White	S White
M&S Whitehead	M&S Whitehead
IC Whitehouse (ICW)	IC Whitehouse (ICW)
N Whitehouse (NW)	N Whitehouse (NW)
S Whitehouse (SWH)	S Whitehouse (SWH)
D Whiteley	D Whiteley
G Whitfield	G Whitfield
G Whittam	G Whittam
S Whittle	S Whittle
M Whorley	M Whorley
M&F Widdowson	M&F Widdowson
M Wiggins	M Wiggins
S Wignill (SW)	S Wignill (SW)
C Wilkinson (CW)	C Wilkinson (CW)
M Wilkinson	M Wilkinson
W Wilkinson	W Wilkinson
P Willey (PW)	P Willey (PW)
DJ Williams (DJW)	DJ Williams (DJW)
D Williams	D Williams
RDR Williams	RDR Williams
P Williamson (PWi)	P Williamson (PWi)
C Willie	C Willie
R Willison	R Willison
A Willocks	A Willocks
B Wilson	B Wilson
D Wilson	D Wilson
J Wilson (JWi)	J Wilson (JWi)
R Wilson (RW)	R Wilson (RW)
C Winn	C Winn
J Wint	J Wint
H Womack	H Womack
B Wood	B Wood
D Wood (DWo)	D Wood (DWo)
P Wood	P Wood
K Woodcock	K Woodcock
D Woodmansey	D Woodmansey
D Woodriff (DWd)	D Woodriff (DWd)
D Woods	D Woods
M Wooler	M Wooler
K Wooley	K Wooley
PB Wordsworth	PB Wordsworth
SP Worwood (SPW)	SP Worwood (SPW)
D Wozencroft	D Wozencroft
J Wozencroft (JWo)	J Wozencroft (JWo)
J Wragg (JWr)	J Wragg (JWr)
P Wragg (PWr)	P Wragg (PWr)
EM Wright	EM Wright
G&W Wright	G&W Wright
K Wright (KWr)	K Wright (KWr)
W Wright	W Wright
P Wyatt	P Wyatt
M Wyngrove	M Wyngrove
C Yarborough	C Yarborough
L Young	L Young
W Younis	W Younis
A Zabukas	A Zabukas
AD Ziemacki	AD Ziemacki



Observers who have first-hand knowledge of rare breeding birds within the county are requested to submit their evidence to the appropriate Vice-County Recorder or the Report Editor, to be forwarded to the Rare Breeding Birds Panel. The RBBP was formed in 1972 by representatives of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the British Trust for Ornithology, The Nature Conservancy Council and *British Birds*. The present Panel is made up of representatives of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, RSPB, BTO, and the Association of County Report Editors, together with two independent members and a Secretary. The Panel's prime function is to act as a secure depository of sensitive information on the breeding of rare birds in Britain.

Information is required for most species on Schedule 1 of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act and other rare species dealt with by the Panel, including all the scarcer non-native breeding species, including feral geese, Black Swan, Muscovy Duck, Parakeets *etc*. Information is requested on breeding or potential breeding records of all of these species in three categories: **possible, probable, proved**.

Definitions of these categories are on the recording forms.

Species for which information is required that are known to have bred, or attempted to breed, in recent years in Yorkshire are listed below.

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| * Gadwall | * Hobby | * Wood Lark |
| Pintail | * Quail | Bluethroat |
| Garganey | Water Rail | Black Redstart |
| Shoveler | Spotted Crake | Fieldfare |
| * Common Pochard | Corn Crake | Cetti's Warbler |
| Black-necked Grebe | Avocet | Marsh Warbler |
| Bittern | * Little Ringed Plover | Firecrest |
| Honey-buzzard | Black-tailed Godwit | * Bearded Tit |
| Marsh Harrier | Mediterranean Gull | Golden Oriole |
| * Hen Harrier | Little Gull | Parrot Crossbill |
| Montagu's Harrier | Roseate Tern | Hawfinch |
| * Northern Goshawk | * Little Tern | * Common Rosefinch |
| | Eagle Owl | |

In the case of the Less Scarce Species (marked* above), the VC Recorder prepares a summary each year for the Panel.

For the Rare Species, recording forms are completed detailing the status, success and site of each pair.

The system used by the Panel for indicating geographical locations in their report is done on a regional basis with Yorkshire being part of "England North". In some instances the county will be named but should the observer request the omission of "Yorkshire" the Panel will respect this with only the region being named. A full list of the species considered by the Panel appeared in *British Birds* 81: p102 – 103, and is on the RBBP website.

Observers may, if they wish, submit records directly to the Panel Secretary, but the normal procedure is to send them in the first instance to the relevant County Recorder who will forward them to the Panel.

Panel report forms are available from the Report Editor, Vice-County recorders or direct from the RBBP by post or from the RBBP website.

Write to:
The Secretary, (Mark Holling)
Rare Breeding Birds Panel,
The Old Orchard, Grange Road, North Berwick,
East Lothian. EH39 4QT
Phone: 01620 894037
e-mail: secretary@rbbp.org.uk
website: www.rbbp.org.uk



Detailed site specific information was received for the following locations, including local society/club reports where indicated below; readers requiring additional information on those areas are advised to consult the relevant club recorder/report.

- | | |
|--|--|
| Barnsley Bird Study Group 2008 Bird Report | Leeds Bird Club 2008 Bird Report |
| Beal Carrs 2008 | Lower Derwent Valley NNR 2008 |
| Bempton Cliffs RSPB 2008 | Malham Tarn 2008 Bird Report |
| Birdguides | North Cave Wetlands 2008 |
| Birdtrack | Potteric Carr 2008 Bird Report |
| Blackmoorfoot Res 2008 | Pugney's CP 2008 |
| Blacktoft Sands 2008 | Pulfin Bog 2008 Natural History Report |
| Bradford Ornithological Group 2008 Bird Report | Rodley NR 2007 Bird Report |
| British Trust for Ornithology | Rotherham 2008 |
| Buckton 2008 | Ryedale Natural History Society 2008 Report |
| Central Science Laboratories 2008 Bird Report | Scarborough 2008 Bird Report |
| Cleveland 2008 Bird Report | Sheffield 2008 Bird Report |
| Cononley Ornithological Group 2008 Bird Report | Southfield Res & Went Ings 2008 Bird Report |
| Edderthorpe Flash Bird 2008 | Sorby Natural History Society 2008 |
| Fairburn Ings Nature Reserve 2008 Bird Report | Spurn Wildlife 2008 Report |
| Filey Brigg Ornithological Group 2008 Bird Report | Thorne Moors 2008 Bird Report |
| Flamborough Bird Observatory 2008 Bird Report | Thorpe Marsh 2008 |
| Grimston 2008 | Upper Wharfedale 2008 Bird Report |
| Halifax 2007/2008 Bird Report | Winterset 2008 |
| Hatfield Moors 2008 | York 2008 Bird Report |
| Harrogate & District Naturalists' Society 2008 Bird Report | Yorkshire Birding 2008 |
| Huddersfield Birdwatchers Club Bird Report 2008 | Yorkshire Dales National Park 2008 |
| Hull Valley Wildlife Group 2008 | Yorkshire Red Kite Newsletter 2008 |
| Kelk 2008 | Yorkshire Wildlife Trust 2008 Breeding Bird Survey |



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The *Yorkshire Bird Report* is an annual publication intended as a record of interesting ornithological observations made within the historic county of Yorkshire; for further details of the recording area, please refer to the map opposite. As the Report aims to be an accurate record, all unusual sightings have been accepted by the YNU's adjudication panel or, where applicable, the British Birds Rarities Committee prior to publication.

Manuscripts relating to migration studies, the documentation of unusual sightings, or local patch studies are welcomed, with those submitted subject to editing where appropriate. The editors will gladly discuss contributions with the authors and advise on preparation.

GENERAL

When a bird species is mentioned both the English and scientific name must be given, thereafter, the English name only. English names should follow that of the BOU *Checklist of Birds of Britain and Ireland* (7th edition, 2006) updated by BOU 2006. Metric units must be used; dates should be in the form 1st January 2008. Numbers one to ten should be written in full, except when used with a measurement abbreviation or higher number, thus: five birds, but 5km and 5-11 birds. Numerals are used for all numbers greater than ten, written thus: 11, 110, 1100 and 11,000.

MANUSCRIPTS

These should preferably be sent electronically as an email attachment to craigcthomas@yahoo.co.uk or mailed on a disk. The text, tables, figure legends (which must be self explanatory) and appendices should be combined in one Word.doc file. A hard copy must be provided with any article that includes tables or graphics. Alternatively, typescripts, original maps and diagrams can be sent by mail. All articles are credited with the authors name.

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It is assumed that all the above conditions have been understood and accepted.

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